SPECIAL
PAGE SEX ISSUE

Autumn 1997 ◆ Number 13

The Women's Quarterly

Let's Face it, Girls: The Sexual Revolution Was a Mistake

F. Carolyn Graglia
on why we lost

Lisa Schiffren
on what we lost

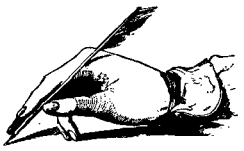
And *Melinda Ledden Sidak*
on what to do about it

Plus: *David Brooks* duels
with *Christopher Hitchens*
over political babes

And much more!

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Diary



Low Style

Sitting in the ladies' shoe department, amidst an array of opened boxes and crumpled tissue, a woman near me sighed, "It's going to be a bad year for shoes." And indeed it was. How much money was I going to have to spend for a pair of plain black pumps that wouldn't make me look as I were off to be an extra in a Leni Reifenstahl movie, or to sing back-up for Kiss? Lining the shelves were combat boots and towering platform shoes. Others had soles that looked as if they'd been wrested from tractor tires; still others fat, angular heels that could do double-duty as door wedges. Even the "conservative" styles were only slightly pared down versions of these: ugly, clumpy things with unflattering straight heels and flat toes. I ended up paying more than I have ever spent in my life for a pair of shoes, and even then they attracted the mirth of my six-year-old daughter.

Alas, the bad mood that seized shoemakers this fall seems to have seized everyone else in fashion as well. I don't know why Naomi Wolf thinks the beauty industry is conspiring to make us all want to look thin and lovely; to the contrary, it seems to want us all to look like battered lesbians. Littering the autumn catalogues of Nieman Marcus and Saks were women with scorched red cheeks, brush cuts dyed bright orange, and aggrieved expressions. The models in a *New York Times* fashion supplement were made up to look like the deceased members of Heaven's Gate: ghostly pale, skeletal women, some wearing stark blue eye shadow and ghoulish purple lipstick with matching streaks of color in their chopped-off hair. New brands of make-up have appeared with names like "Urban Decay" and "Potholes" offering eye shadows in mucky shades of "West Side Highway" and "Trash."

Fashion editors have issued their usual defense of bizarre high fashion: We are not meant to take it seriously; they are merely offering us fantasies towards which we should aspire. Last year it was heroin addiction.

But if there is one theme that has come to unite the fashions from year to year, it's this: You may do anything to your face and hair, you may wear any length of skirt or any width of pants, but whatever you do, do not consciously make yourself attractive to men. In fact, the rule now seems to be that you must consciously try to make yourself as sexually *unattractive* as possible.

The fashion is really just the latest—if ugliest—expression of a now stale feminist attitude toward beautifying ourselves. You hear it expressed, reflexively and thoughtlessly, on talk shows and in the pages of women's magazines: I didn't do it for him, I did it for *me!* The author of a recent book on facelifts insists that we shouldn't undergo this painful surgery in order to please our husbands, but to please our own egos. Ironically, the only group of people still encouraged to make themselves sexually attractive to men are homosexuals. For some reason, it's seen as fine for oiled, muscular men to pose as objects of pure lust for other men in a Calvin Klein underwear ad, but it's seen as oppressive and sexist if a woman in a bikini graces the pages of *Sports Illustrated* for the same reason.

Obviously, we're lying to ourselves. Most women who check their mirrors every day hope men will find them pretty. And so they should. Why dressing in a way that is sexually pleasing to the opposite sex should be seen as wrong or demeaning just shows how deeply the feminist view has taken over. In order to be free, the theory goes, we must suppress everything about us that makes us feminine, and thus attractive to men; the moment a man views us as a sexual object, we are doomed.

But of course men view us—whether we are wearing blue lipstick or red—as sexual objects. They regard us as many other things as well. And not only is this not wrong, it is the basis of human attraction. If we really believed that the only point of fashion was to please ourselves, then millions more women would be content to walk around in their bathrobes and curlers and wrinkled faces. As it is, it just shows the ridiculous power of the fashion industry that so many women can be persuaded that they look attractive wearing combat boots and eyes smudged with fecal brown slicks of "Trash."

– Danielle Crittenden

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Women's Quarterly

Autumn 1997 ◆ No. 13

Danielle Crittenden
Editor

Grace Paine Terzian
Publisher

Mitzi Hamilton
Art Director

Rhonda K. Mohrmann
Editorial Assistant

2111 Wilson Boulevard
Suite 550, Arlington, Virginia
22201-3057

Tel.: 703/243-8989
Toll Free Line: 800/224-6000
Fax: 703/243-9230
E-mail: iwf@iwf.org
Website: www.iwf.org

The Women's Quarterly (ISSN:1079-6622) is published by the Independent Women's Forum, a nonprofit Section 501(c)(3) organization. Contributions are tax deductible to the extent permitted by law.

The opinions and views expressed in *The Women's Quarterly* are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of the Independent Women's Forum. Permission to reprint any article must be obtained from the editor. Submissions are welcome and can be mailed or faxed to the editor. All inquiries regarding the Independent Women's Forum and *The Women's Quarterly*, including membership and subscription information, and changes in address, should be directed to our office listed above. Annual membership in the Independent Women's Forum is $30 and includes a subscription to *The Women's Quarterly*. Separate subscriptions to *The Women's Quarterly* are $19.95 annually. Outside the U.S., add $6 to membership and subscription fees. Back issues of *The Women's Quarterly* are available for $5.

Independent Women's Forum: Anita K. Blair, Executive Vice President and General Counsel; Barbara Ledeen, Executive Director for Policy and Liaison. Board of Directors: Elizabeth Lurie, President; Louise V. Oliver, Vice President; Lynne V. Cheney; Midge Decter; Wendy Lee Gramm; Heather R. Higgins; Candace Klieman; Sally C. Pipes; R. Gaull Silberman.

© 1997 Independent Women's Forum.
All rights reserved.

In *This* Issue

Diary: ***Danielle Crittenden*** can't find a nice pair of shoes 2

Is That All There Is? ***Lisa Schiffren*** advises us to get married, and fast 4

We're All Tramps Now: ***F. Carolyn Graglia*** explains why we lost the sexual revolution 9

Not at My Table: ***Melinda Ledden Sidak*** yearns to revive the social cut 13

The Token Man: ***David Brooks*** and ***Christopher Hitchens*** debate which are sexier: left- or right-wing women 16

And Above All, Lighten Up: ***Jonathan Foreman*** says Americans approach dating like a job interview 20

Interview: ***Becky Garrison*** talks with ***Helen Gurley Brown*** 22

The Real Reason Feminists Won't Defend Paula Jones: ***Noemie Emery*** reveals 26

The Oy! of Sex: ***Cynthia Grenier*** wishes for a bit of prudery in women's magazines 29

The Female Condom and Other Bright Ideas: ***Marc M. Arkin*** tells us what is coming between women and better birth control 30

When Anything Goes: ***Olivia Vlahos*** takes the long view of love 33

Correspondence 36

One Last Observation: Upgrading from Girlfriend 4.0 to Wife 1.0 39

Cover drawing by John Springs. Cartoon (above) by Charles Jaffé

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Is That All There Is?

For a good time, get married, advises *Lisa Schiffren*

I AM STANDING amid wildly blooming roses and peonies at a spring garden party in Connecticut talking to a woman I have known, if only to chat with, since I worked with her husband some years ago. Her three- and six-year-old daughters are running around, playing energetically. My almost-two-year-old is spending the afternoon with her grandmother. I want another couple of children. In fact, I had hoped that the next one would be on its way by now, because I am not so young, and childbearing is not so pleasant that I have any desire to stretch out the years I will spend pregnant.

But I do not appear to be in control of the timing in these matters, a fact that has been worrying me lately as I have watched two-thirds of a year slip by since my husband and I began trying to have another baby. I ask this woman, who is a few years older than I, why she chose a three-year spread between children, instead of the more conventional eighteen months to two years.

Drawings by Agnes Aru

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

She looks at me with surprise, as if the answer is too obvious to need speaking. "I would have preferred less time between. But it took us an extra year."

I felt bad for asking, but am relieved to hear, again, that no one has that much control.

"We want another one," she volunteers. "So far it's been nineteen months. Ten months is average in your late thirties." (A figure we both know by heart.)

"Last year at this party," she continues, warming to the subject, "[a woman we both know, a former investment banker in her forties] said to me, 'Why don't you save yourself the grief and just shell out the $20,000 for IVF now?' You know she did that for both of hers?"

I didn't know. "So?"

"I'm on Clomid now. If it doesn't work, IVF is next. I probably should have done it a year ago. What about you?"

Though it is a fact of life among couples I know well and casually, I haven't really thought about in-vitro fertilization, or any other medical intervention in personal terms, but....

On the way home from the party I repeat the story to my husband. He reminds me that the bank he works for includes two IVF treatments among its medical benefits. When he first went to work there we had laughed about the perverse nature of benefits meant to lure well-educated, ambitious baby boomers; the "my-career-was-too-important-for-me-to-get-married-and-have-children-when-nature-intended-but-now-I-need-help" benefit struck us as darkly amusing.

At my daughter's playgroup at the Y, the average age of mothers is a shade south of forty, myself included (this is Manhattan), and the subject of whether or not these first-time moms will be having more children is a delicate one. Two are expecting babies a mere fourteen months after their first were born, having been pushed by ob/gyns who urged them not to tempt fate. One can't have more because her husband is supporting the offspring of his previous marriages. Several won't be having more because of the misery and unpleasantness of trying for years: After watching all marital intimacy boil down to failure each month as a menstrual period arrived, undergoing invasive tests, trying to avert blame, finally pinning hopes on chemicals and procedures with high failure rates, they came too close to destroying their marriages and their sense of themselves as women.

Alone at the park, one forty-two-year-old mother said, looking at her son, "I love him more than anything. My husband and I both come from large families. We'd love to have more children, and if it happens, great. But if it won't without chemicals, then I can't go through that again."

This is not to mention the legions of Chinese baby girls, Romanian orphans, and tow-headed Ukrainian toddlers now living in all of the nation's major cities, attached to forty-to-fiftyish couples whom they have saved from childlessness.

And, of course, there are the professionally successful, married, childless, baby-boomer women one knows, who I always assumed were uninterested in children for the usual constellation of feminist and careerist reasons. I was bowled over and deeply saddened when, shortly after my own marriage, half a dozen such women, some of whom I had only the most tenuous professional connection to, made a point of telling me in direct and personal ways not to dare think of waiting to have children. Their stories were mundane: late marriages after the usual affairs, flings, and serial relationships that never materialized into marriage.

Then there is the saddest group of all: women with the same history of serial relationships, often including a brief marriage, who end up alone just as the biological clock is winding down. They are inevitably tempted by sperm bank services and support groups for unmarried women who want to be mothers.

I could go on. When we were in our twenties, my liberated generation talked about the men we were dating, or not; the sex we were having, or not (somehow the subject was equally fraught and painful, either way); the love and permanence and stability we craved and manifestly lacked, because the cost of all that sexual freedom was that no one got married in those years, despite the fact that we all knew we wanted to. Now, amidst the joy we take in our families, my peers speak freely about the frustrations of being older mothers (or not), the miscarriages, the genetic risks, the only children who should have siblings.

So how, now, should we think about sex?

JUST IN CASE the above sledgehammer missed your head, let me say that, while there was a time when I thought that the main cost of the sexual revolution was all of the emotional pain my generation absorbed from premature or frivolous sexual relations gone awry, in the long run the greatest cost to women of uncommitted sexual relationships—of short and long duration—is that the window for getting married and having children is way smaller than one can possibly foresee

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

at, say, twenty-five. There are worse things than being pregnant when you don't want to be, and not being able to have children when you finally do want them is one.

So here is lesson number one: Whatever benefits sexual freedom affords girls—and there are, unquestionably, a few—it creates costs of a quite profound nature for the women they will become. Childlessness, whether because one is unmarried or infertile, is the cause of considerably deeper unhappiness in the lives of women (and the men they marry) than desire deferred. It has multiplied exponentially, post-liberation, because a generation was taught that they could and really should screw around as they saw fit while they were establishing their all-important careers. In time, everything would "fall into place," and we'd be better off for all that easy, guilt-free, consequence-free sexual experience that our grandmothers were denied.

But time is not on a woman's side when it comes to fertility. And that is to say nothing of the little-discussed data which overwhelmingly indicate that the greater exposure to bacteria and sexually transmitted diseases that inevitably accompany multiple sexual partners is a major culprit in female infertility.

I need hardly add that conservative girls, religious or not, know that marriage and family are the heart of life. Without it, almost all endeavor is somewhat hollow and life is pervasively lonely (for men, too). If that implies a defense of the traditional bourgeois social order, well, it turns out that for all its drawbacks, most alternatives are worse. Of course you could "take control of your sexuality," as so many "powerful" women have. I'm thinking of that icon of the genre, Madonna. Surely I am not the only one who thinks it more than a little distasteful to respond to the ticking of a biological clock by having yourself impregnated by a personal trainer, having tired of cruising Hispanic neighborhoods, picking up teenage boys? It is unclear what, precisely, "power" means in this context, or why one might want it.

But there you are, twenty-four, smart, attractive, and on your way to a brilliant career. Of course you're going to get married and have kids. You learned something watching Gloria Steinem's generation of feminists growing old alone. But girls like you don't get married so soon either. You're having a pretty good time right now, gathering experience. So what's the problem?

Perhaps women a mere decade or so younger than me really are in control. Perhaps they are just as cool, poised, and calculating as my friends were not. Perhaps the human race has made a giant leap forward in accommodating itself to radical, inner-self-on-the-line uncertainty in the past ten years. Of course I'm a conservative because I believe that some things do not change, human nature among them. So I expect that young women come to personal relationships with the same emotions and hopes they always have, regardless of the current structure society promulgates. If anything, I'd guess that the escalating disintegration of family life leaves young women that much more needy for love, and vulnerable to the instability and ego devastation inherent in the laissez-faire sexual marketplace we quaintly call "dating."

Specifically, I cannot imagine that girls in their teens and twenties now are better adapted to the near-ubiquitous experience women my age had of going out with someone, sleeping with him (sooner), in the expectation that a relationship was building, and never hearing from him again. Even those smart enough not to do that twice (few people I knew were actual-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ly that smart) used to marvel, with bitterness and fear, at the fact that nice middle-class boys, from homes with values no different than ours, thought this behavior was acceptable. I knew a lot of otherwise intelligent women—and more than a few men—who took longer than they might have to learn to avoid that scenario, and developed more than a little scar tissue along the way. (I've also known more than a few men who became so spoiled that one doubts they will ever sustain a monogamous relationship.)

There was about this brutal sexual marketplace a necessarily "macha" ethos. It was considered uncool to care too much, to have what were contemptuously called "expectations," about the kind of permanence that sexual involvement might buy. Similarly, people had little patience with anyone who indulged her wounds.

Do these experiences make women stronger, as the sexual liberationists asserted? I doubt it. It can only weaken a young woman's confidence in herself, her judgment, and the society around her when she experiences the powerlessness of being dumped after sleeping with someone, having been led to believe that she had as much control over events as the guy. For more than a generation now, that is how girls have learned the truth about their control of the powerful force of sex unbounded by formal commitment. Because when that happened, nothing, not waiting patiently, not calling with some hokey pretext, not taking matters into one's own hands and inviting him for dinner or whatever the geniuses at the women's magazines advised, would turn things around. The unfair, ugly fact about the mating dance is that so much of female sexual power depends on withholding oneself. If anything, that is even truer in an age where all the other girls are available, too.

Lately, I keep reading wedding announcements of Ivy League graduates getting married at twenty-five. I think they're doing the right thing. Especially when I hear stories from the front. Recently I had lunch with an attractive, successful, thirty-year-old woman who began the conversation by asking me, "When you were dating, did you find that men you'd been out with just stood you up?"

Men have their complaints, too. One of my husband's colleagues is constantly fending off women who show up at his apartment late at night, or wish to continue a relationship merely because they feel one is underway, or are deeply emotionally needy and, having slept with him, feel entitled to have other needs met. As unpleasant as his behavior is, the women are complicit. The lack of rules exacerbate the natural tensions between men and women, instead of channeling them toward a constructive end.

Conservative girls rightly believe that whining about victimhood is bad form in a world where most of us have a full range of opportunities to make what we will of our lives. But here is the rub: An ethos that applies to economic and labor market functions—pure choice—is only a metaphor in the sexual marketplace. There, the more laissez-faire the rules, the more women, even those who participate of their own free will, are likely to suffer disproportionate harms. That is because sex has emotional and physical consequences for women it does not have for men, something no one ever questioned until our own deeply foolish time.

In my twenties I thought that such experiences, no matter which side of the equation one was on—dumped or dumper (which turns out to be almost as unpleasant a role)—would deaden us all to the possibilities for profound and tender love. I wondered how we would know when to forsake being cagey and hard, and when it was permissible to be sufficiently open to let another human being touch your heart. I frequently watched my friends indulge natural enthusiasm, hopes, and "expectations" regarding someone in whom they were romantically interested. Sooner or later small, discordant details would emerge in their stories and then things would come to a crashing halt. In retrospect it seems as if we were all, always, poised for that sudden ending. That we thought this state of affairs, as opposed to the stability of marriage, would allow us to concentrate on our all-important careers is a testament to the power of feminist propaganda.

TIME HEALS MOST wounds. For the most part, my acquaintances did not emerge from the dating gauntlet unnaturally hardened. Some remain angry about the fact that they were handed so completely untrue a picture of human nature and the realities of relations between the sexes. At sixteen, eighteen, even twenty-five, much of anyone's understanding of human nature is received. For all the feminist denunciation of the patriarchy, the real problem for girls who came of age in the past three decades has been the failure of older women to offer them a map with which to navigate the terrain of sexuality, courtship, and marriage. In part, of course, many of those older women kept silent because their own understanding of these matters had been

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

blown apart during the sexual revolution, and they either embraced the new, or had been devastated by it, as in the case of many unwilling divorcees.

The emotions that do linger, especially at life's more profound moments, tend to be regret and shame. I first became aware of this shortly before a friend's wedding. We were having a drink when, apropos of nothing, he said he regretted all the "baggage" he brought to the marriage. "Huh?" I responded, startled by what he was suggesting, since I'd known him long enough to know what a struggle getting that experience had been. He wasn't a casual sex kind of boy; yet of the four relationships he'd had, in retrospect only one would be worth repeating.

Among people with any moral sensibility about sex, events like marriage, or contemplating what they will eventually tell a newborn child, summon these thoughts. At those moments when the deeper meaning of sex is clear—as an expression of the kind of love to which one makes a lifetime commitment, as the vehicle for the creation of new life as a manifestation of that love—the frivolity and ultimate meaninglessness of sex outside of those conditions becomes stark.

Sex is not rational; some women are irresponsible; many women are ambivalent in their desires; and some women have dark, or calculated, inclinations to run risks. So things people call "accidents" happen. When whatever constitutes authority in society signals to the entire population—regardless of age, circumstance, or competence—that it is free to have sex regardless of ability to provide for the inevitable offspring, that society must offer abortion freely, as ours does. I graduated from a women's college in 1982, before the sexual revolution had been sufficiently repealed to induce discretion among sophisticated young women. So I know a lot of abortion stories, all concerning ambitious, intelligent women who had no problems understanding the mechanics of birth control.

There is no good outcome to out-of-wedlock pregnancy. Though I consider myself pro-life, I have a hard time saying that all of those young women were entirely wrong in their choice. But, at 1.5 million abortions a year for the past twenty years, we have raised a generation of young women who can treat the life their bodies produce as so much waste to be disposed of. What is the human cost of such a hardening of souls—the very souls who must nurture the next generation? And for all that, one-third of the children born in this decade are illegitimate; the social costs are enormous.

To be sure, not all endings are painful: Some flings leave everybody happier than they were, some relationships make sense on their terms, which do not include permanence. Girls are resilient as well as vulnerable. Most people ultimately get married and life goes on. That said, conservative girls who don't have strong religious backgrounds and traditional morality to guide them must fall back on cost-benefit analysis. Lest I sound like a crabbed, anti-sex crank, today we're listing the costs. Rules and standards are society's only hedge against the law of the jungle. In the jungle, more women will be prey than successful predators.

So what then?

Well, there is no returning to the status quo ante. The cult of virginity that preceded the sexual revolution seems downright silly in retrospect. That 1950s cult—with its double standard for adult women, and its focus on the shallow question of "reputation"—was a sure sign that the underlying moral structure was hollow. Had Americans been afraid of failing to obey God's law, for instance, instead of just being afraid of pregnancy, then the advent of the pill would not have been so earth-shattering.

Religion is an excellent answer. For those with faith, awe, and a community of like-minded people maintaining the same standard, it works. Can we afford to wait for a mass revival of Judeo-Christian orthodoxy?

Virginity is, of course, important and appropriate for teenagers. But it is very hard to imagine a society where educated adult women participate in the labor market and the learned professions, and yet kowtow to such a standard through their twenties. Nor is it so easy to imagine an ethos of pure self-restraint strong enough to long deter fooling around in the face of reliable contraception.

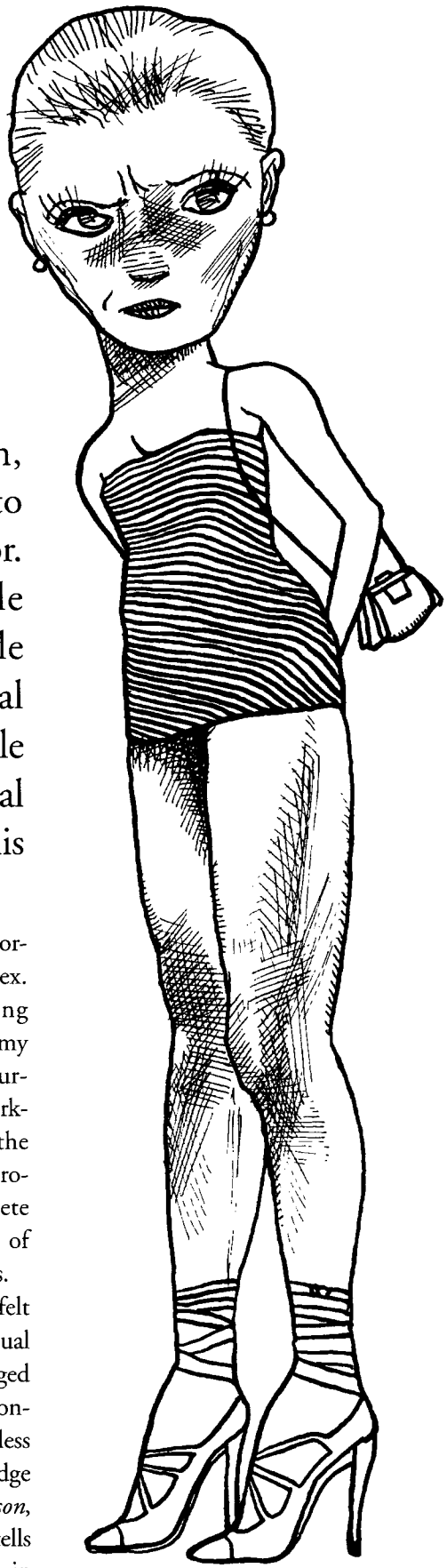
A wise culture seeks to channel, not to overcome, the deepest human needs. And so, the only workable answer is a return to early marriage. Not too early, to be sure. But surely one's mid-twenties make much more sense than a decade on. The goal of being married by twenty-five should imbue early dating with a purposefulness it has lacked in recent decades. And, ironically, it will create the conditions necessary for that old feminist dream: having it all, work and family, by, say, forty. ◆

Lisa Schiffren, who serves on the IWF's National Advisory Board, was a speechwriter for former Vice President Dan Quayle.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

We're All Tramps Now

Why we lost the sexual revolution, by *F. Carolyn Graglia*



BY ENDORSING THE sexual revolution, feminists persuaded many women to adopt male patterns of sexual behavior. They encouraged women to reject the double standard that tolerated male promiscuity while expecting the female to cultivate modesty, sexual reticence, and discretion. They regarded this double standard as one of the worst abuses of patriarchal oppression of women. Instead, by abandoning this double standard, women lost their sexual power.

Even critics of other aspects of feminist ideology subscribe to the myth that the double standard was an affliction to women. A typical example is writer Katherine Kersten's belief that "women have benefited significantly from their new-found sexual autonomy" afforded by the sexual revolution.

But to credit the sexual revolution with giving us previously unavailable sexual opportunities is to believe that there has ever been a time in history when relationships were marred by the man's refusal to have sex with a willing woman. The only result feminists accomplished by endorsing the sexual revolution was to deprive women of the societal support they needed to refuse to engage in casual sex. Women in my generation, growing up in the 1940s and 1950s, did not lack opportunities to engage in premarital sex. We could grow up without being remotely sequestered (lying about my age, I obtained my first job at fourteen, working a night shift with working-class men). We could enjoy the best education. We could have a profession that guaranteed us complete financial independence. But some of us shunned promiscuity nonetheless.

That's because we would have felt demeaned and degraded by the casual sexual activities that were being urged upon us by feminist sexual revolutionaries and artfully justified as harmless sources of pleasure by men like Judge Richard A. Posner. In *Sex and Reason*, this erudite economist and jurist tells us that the "traditional female role, in

Drawing by John Springs

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

which premarital virginity and marital chastity are so emphasized, is an impediment to women's educational and occupational, as well as their sexual, equality."

Posner offers no other coherent reason for condemning the sexual modesty and reticence integral to traditional femininity. Why would pre-marital virginity and marital chastity impede either a woman's educational or occupational endeavors? It was certainly never my experience that they did. They were, on the contrary, part of a sexual ethos which protected me from what could have been distracting and personally harmful interference with my academic and career pursuits.

Women once confidently controlled the sexual aspects of their dating relationships, setting and enforcing the rules while viewing the male as a suppliant who would be grateful for whatever sexual favors he received (which usually would be something short of intercourse). Not yet misled by feminist teachings, females knew these were favors. Cultural mores entitled us to rebuff sexual advances because no one believed male and female sexuality were the same or that women's craving for casual sexual activity equaled men's.

The woman also knew that there was nothing wrong with her feeling this way; to suggest that her equality with males required that she pretend otherwise would have seemed absurd. No one questioned that men and women differed in their taste for premarital sexual activity: The average man, we knew, was born with lust in his heart for raw sex; the average woman, with a yearning for romance, and the ability, if given the right circumstances, to cultivate a taste for satisfying her physical lust through sexual intercourse. Casual sexual activity, we also knew, was ill-suited to providing those circumstances.

Having absorbed feminist teachings, women became confused and diffident as to their right to control the nature and extent of premarital sexual activity. They feared that less-than-enthusiastic participation would establish their difference from, and hence their inequality with, men. Today, well-educated, professional women, who are embarrassed to defend the unsophisticated concepts of virginity and chastity, are less competent to control men's sexual advances than high school girls in the 1940s.

One result is the invention of concepts like "date rape" and an expansive law of sexual harassment in an attempt to provide the protection for women against seduction that unsophisticated high school girls once felt completely confident in securing for themselves with a graceful—and, we sometimes thought, even elegant—refusal. These concepts are simply desperate attempts to distort the criminal law in order to reassert some form of female control over ordinary dating relationships. The feminists' new campaign demonstrates how vulnerably bereft of self-confidence women have become since feminist sexual revolutionaries convinced society that women share a male appetite for promiscuous sex.

Feminism has attempted to justify its endorsement of the sexual revolution, however, as a way to acquaint women with sexual fulfillment.

In *Re-Making Love: The Feminization of Sex*, Barbara Ehrenreich, *et al.*, argued that it was because women's sexual satisfaction had not counted before that female sexual revolutionaries became obsessed with the topic of their orgasms. But this is not so. Rather, it was the attempt to imitate stereotypical male sexual activity—sex without the magic and mystery of romance—that resulted in casual sexual relationships in which nothing counted but the orgasm. At the same time, the casualness of these couplings was inconsistent with female orgasmic satisfaction, a more complicated goal than male ejaculation. Women's dissatisfaction with the fruits of loveless sex led to a great demanding by them of men's sexual performance. And from the men's perspective, this demandingness was particularly pernicious because women's increased participation in promiscuous sex invited knowledgeable comparisons of men's sexual performance.

The traditional dating system prevailing before the sexual revolution had always fostered a certain antagonism between men and women. As Christopher Lasch has noted, the system involved a solidarity between members of the same sex combined with an attitude of ridicule toward, and a cynical willingness to exploit, the opposite sex. College students were inclined to "pretend a ruthlessness toward the opposite sex which they did not feel." After playing out this dating ritual, the participants usually found someone who convinced them to abandon the emotional defense of ridicule and acknowledge an incipient love. Throughout the enterprise, wherever she drew the line within the range of sexual possibilities, a woman usually held herself unavailable for sexual intercourse, at least until marriage was imminent. Despite the man's complaints, this unavailability had the benefit of freeing him from the full obligations of sexual performance until a time when he could feel more secure in the woman's affections. At that time, he could still be fairly certain

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

that—whatever his capabilities as a lover—the woman would not have much experience on which to base comparisons.

The new sexual ethos created by the sexual revolution exacerbated the antagonisms of traditional dating relationships and—as Isaac Bashevis Singer powerfully puts it in his condemnation of this ethos—"transformed sex into a marketplace with competitors." Ehrenreich, *et al.*, acknowledged men's sense of injury, citing critics who characterized as "frightening" this "focus on the female orgasm and performance evaluation" of the male, who believed that men do not want women "to be very sexually experienced," and who speculated that "women's clitoral obsessions were driving men to homosexuality." Midge Decter described the sexual pursuits of college students as causing the girls to feel "themselves manipulated and mistreated by males," and the boys to line up "in droves at the student health services seeking help with a problem" that "once unmasked, is either the fear of, or the actual onset of, impotence."

Sociologist Charles Winick suggested that contemporary men's greater misgivings about their sexual performance may be partly due to women's attitude that their failure to obtain orgasms readily meant they were being cheated by men. Compounding the pressures of coping with sexually aggressive, demanding, and experienced women was the new competition men faced as increasing numbers of women entered the workplace. The toll these pressures took helps explain those effete, attenuated males whose sexual fires, in my husband's description, appear to have banked without ever blazing forth.

Men's predicament reminds me of a Labrador retriever we once had who growled so ferociously whenever someone rang our doorbell that we held her collar to prevent her from lunging at the screen door. Late one night, when two threatening men stood outside the screen door, my husband let go of her collar. Instead of lunging, she stopped growling and looked up at him as if to ask why he was no longer holding her back. The collar of sexual morality, with its expectation of greater sexual reticence on the woman's part, was always slipped by those sufficiently determined to gain release. Many women, however, welcomed the support of this restraint in resisting demands for sexual intercourse, while hoping to retain the man's interest in a dating relationship. For a man, the collar of traditional sexual morality provided welcome validation of his potency through an institutional recognition, as it were, that his rather awesome masculinity required curbing: He was given a reassuring aura of dominance as the potential sexual aggressor, yet unless he chose to, he would usually not be called upon to prove it.

On the basis of his studies of human behavior, psychologist David Buss concludes that American men "view the lack of sexual experience as desirable in a spouse." This is so because men "place a premium on fidelity" and "the single best predictor of extramarital sex is premarital sexual permissiveness." Men rank "faithfulness and sexual loyalty" as a wife's "most highly valued trait" and "abhor promiscuity and infidelity in their wives." When a sexual relationship is threatened, says Buss, women are more likely to feel sad and abandoned, and men to experience rage: "Male sexual jealousy is the single most frequent cause of all types of violence directed at wives," and most spousal homicide is "precipitated by male accusations of adultery or by the woman's leaving or threatening to leave the husband." These facts of life, now documented by evolutionary psychologists, were always part of our cultural knowledge. They are facts that feminist sexual revolutionaries chose to ignore. While they and the women who followed their lead obtained what they viewed as sexual freedom—that is, the freedom to imitate male tomcat behavior—they jeopardized their chances of marrying and, once married, of remaining so.

Ehrenreich, et al., claimed that the real sexual revolution was the resurrection of the "long-repressed" clitoris as "visible proof of women's sexual autonomy from men." They refer to "rediscovery of clitoral sexuality" and describe the clitoris as "our rediscovered magic spot." They do not tell us at what period in history they claim the clitoris was repressed or how the alleged repression had been accomplished, thus necessitating the rediscovery they celebrate. Short of excision in clitoridectomy, moreover, it would seem to be well nigh impossible to repress the clitoris, an organ that is not only very tactually responsive but announces its presence in response to sights, sounds, smells, and thoughts. One must query exactly how this organ could be successfully repressed during the nitty-gritty of sexual activity, sitting, as it does, at the very threshold of the enterprise. Its usage has never been an obscure part of our cultural knowledge.

What explains this apparently counterfactual feminist analysis? While it is simply silly to say that the clitoris was repressed and then rediscovered, perhaps in the experience of

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

sexual revolutionaries, the organ was somewhat ignored. When women present themselves as fortresses meant for storming, men will be extremely resourceful in their sallies against the citadel. The contribution of the clitoris in endeavoring to arouse a female was hardly arcane knowledge among boys and men in what feminists choose to call the sexually repressed period before their "revolution"—it was usually the focal point of the offensive. If this cultural knowledge was lost to, or purposely ignored by, a significant number of men, an important contributing factor would have been the changed dynamics of sexual encounters, as women undertook to ape the undifferentiated lust that characterizes male sexual patterns. Confronted with women who avowed an equal desire for casual sexual intercourse, some men may have taken these women at their word and neglected the clitoral attentions so helpful in securing women's sexual gratification.

Such neglect would not be surprising when one considers that, as Posner notes, "prostitutes are becoming more like other women," while at the same time the sexual revolution "has vastly increased the number of women available for casual liaisons." As a result, prostitutes, who in earlier times provided "normal," "ordinary" sex, have been replaced in that market by ordinary women whose services are relatively costless. Prostitutes must now specialize in servicing men who want "kinky" sex and men with physical or emotional disabilities, categories that do not fare well in the market of casual sex. Some indication of the degree to which ordinary women have replaced prostitutes appears from the situation in Paris where about twenty thousand persons now serve as prostitutes, and many of these are men. In 1890, when the population was one fifth of its present size, Paris was served by one hundred thousand prostitutes.

THUS HAVE YOUNG WOMEN been convinced to play the whore for their male peers. In the United States today, an adolescent high school male can find at the desk next to him a young girl equipped by their high school clinic with the latest birth control device ready to provide him with the sexual services that, in an earlier time, he would have received, if at all, from a prostitute. The soaring pregnancy and abortion statistics on many campuses across the country confirm the condition of sexual servitude to which our sexual revolution consigned the best-educated segment of our female population. And just as liberated female sexual revolutionaries replaced prostitutes by creating a competing market of free sex, it should not be surprising if they shared the prostitute's dearth of sexual pleasure. ◆

© 1997 by F. Carolyn Graglia. *Adapted from her book,* Domestic Tranquility: A Brief Against Feminism, *just published by Spence (1-888-773-6782).*

POLL-POURRI

You Say You Wanted a Revolution?

IN THE 1950s *and early 1960s, few pollsters asked questions about sexual norms, so it's impossible to pinpoint the changes we call the sexual revolution. But in 1970, the National Opinion Research Center at the University of Chicago (NORC) did a survey that found, among other things, that eighty-six percent of Americans said that sex outside marriage was always or almost always wrong, eleven percent said it was sometimes wrong, and only two percent thought it not wrong at all. When Gallup updated the figures in June 1997, the results were almost identical. Ninety percent said extramarital sex was always or almost always wrong, six percent said that it was wrong only sometimes, and three percent not wrong at all.*

Meanwhile, the sexual revolution has contributed to increased concern about the country's moral standards. In 1937, forty-five percent in a Fortune *poll said that sexual moral standards were worse than they were a generation ago. In 1996, when Gallup asked people to evaluate moral values in the past twenty-five years, seventy-six percent said they were weaker, and just seven percent said they were better.*

–Karlyn Bowman, the American Enterprise Institute.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Not at My Table

The same disapproval we level against smokers should be brought against people who behave in socially destructive ways, insists *Melinda Ledden Sidak*

A couple of years ago, I attended a dinner at a leading conservative institution. The tables were filled with prominent public intellectuals, including many advocates of restoring family values and traditional sexual mores to American society, and various chroniclers of the social horror of family breakdown. As I chatted with the gentleman on my left, a man affiliated with the institution, we somehow fell into conversation about child care. "Oh, by the way," he asked, "Do you know any good nannies? My girlfriend and I are expecting a baby in February."

What's a social conservative to do?

As he chatted on—how much he and his girlfriend were looking forward to this child, the problems of working mothers, etc.—what really floored me was not so much my dinner companion's personal life, but that he felt no compunction at all about flaunting it. There was no attempt even to "keep up appearances," for it never occurred to him that he was letting them down. More to the point, no disapproval would be expressed—certainly not by the other people at our table, nor, I presume, his colleagues, nor even his own relatives.

I kept chewing my food, brooding on what to say. Although the new morality that has brought us to these situations is said to encourage people to be "up front" and not to repress their true feelings, I knew that there would only be trouble if I expressed mine. Still, if my dinner companion wanted to *épater les bourgeois*, I decided my job was to uphold the bourgeois end of things and be épatéed. So rather than discuss nannies, I finally blurted that he should marry his girlfriend.

I don't know if my little outburst made any difference, but I did feel

that it was the first step in the proverbial thousand-mile journey. I had experienced what the feminists used to call a "click" moment. Why should I sit there and nod benignly?

Alas, my disapproval was obviously unlikely to have any broader consequences. It would not have the impact, for instance, of what used to happen to people engaged in these living arrangements—total ostracism from respectable company. Consequences like those really altered the cost-benefit calculation a man and women would make before she got pregnant without a marriage certificate. They encouraged people at least to keep up appearances, and in an imperfect world, often appearances are the next best thing.

This is not a radical idea. Despite the self-expression revolution of the past few decades, imposing stringent social sanctions on behavior we wish to discourage is very much alive and well. Just think about smoking. There are also regular news reports of people, sometimes famous people, fired or disgraced for making racially or sexually insensitive remarks, even when hurt was in no way intended. The only novel suggestion is putting certain sexual behaviors into the same category as smoking, racism, and sexism.

Although I got quite a rush from my first little foray into judgmentalism (I can see why talk-show therapist "Dr. Laura" Schlessinger enjoys her work), I admit that I have not had the courage to go the distance.

In the few years since my dinner conversation, it has now become acceptable to express general social disapproval of illegitimacy. Illegitimacy, however, is in many ways too easy a target. After all, among the chattering classes, one doesn't actually meet too many people with illegitimate children. The real challenge today is how to respond to other forms of less obviously toxic sexual license, namely, those indulged in by one's friends, family, and self.

William Bennett highlighted this delicate problem a few years ago when he told a Christian Coalition conference that he "under[stood] the aversion to homosexuality. I understand the difference between approval and toler-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ance. But if you look in terms of the damage to the children of America, you cannot compare what the homosexual movement, the gay rights movement, has done with what divorce has done to this society .... If you leave your wife and get yourself a 'trophy wife,' you're not going to be greeted with condemnation or even a raised eye by most people, because it has become a convention. But what has it done to American society?"

As if that were not enough, Bennett went directly into the belly of the beast, bringing his message about divorce to a conference of investors and media executives in Aspen last fall. "Don't just look at young black men or at women on welfare. We've got to look at ourselves. We need to set an example of standing by your family and your children and your commitment." According to *Time*, Bennett's audience, the "Masters of the Universe, many sitting with second or third wives, were visibly uncomfortable."

Bennett and Schlessinger are unusual in their willingness to chastise—even to shame—people publicly. They even seem to be having an impact. But the majority of people would never dream of expressing the most timorous disapproval of divorce, or, more daring, sex outside of marriage. Thus, as intellectuals and commentators survey the social wreckage around them caused by sexual laxity, and the terrible effects of divorce and fatherlessness on children, no one knows quite what to do about it.

In order to restore monogamous marriage as the societal ideal, Maggie Gallagher has argued for a repeal of no-fault divorce laws. Barbara Dafoe Whitehead and communitarians like Amitai Etzioni have argued in effect for a "carrot-only" policy, as opposed to a carrot-and-stick policy: provide more social support and positive reinforcements for marriage. That's nice, but as Robert Wright wrote in *Time* magazine last year, "it would certainly be nice if we could restore monogamous marriage without stiff moral sanction. But on this point, the history of the world is not encouraging." Wright, a proponent of evolutionary psychology, observes that making divorce shameful, as it is in Japan and was in Victorian England and 19th-century America, is the only way civilization has found effectively to restrain the human—and particularly the male—propensity for polygamy as a reproductive strategy.

But behavior cannot be shamed, and thus curtailed, in the absence of a broad-based, mainstream consensus that the behavior is, in fact, wrong. Conservatives certainly have been readier than liberals to call for the moral revival that must underpin any restoration of shame, but the failure to apply consistent standards has justly laid them open to charges of double standards.

As *National Review*'s Ramesh Ponnuru has observed, liberals eagerly have seized on "hypocrisy as the only private sin that deserves public censure" in order to attack conservative politicians and others seeking to elevate moral standards. But he correctly notes, "if a society doesn't want to see many of its members fall short of its moral standards, it can only have minimal or nonexistent standards. Which is, of course, the direction in which modern liberalism pushes America." Nonetheless, it is and always has been the responsibility of elites to live up to the standards they espouse and, more to the point, to express disapproval of those who do not. After all, if elites don't, who will?

There is a formidable obstacle to even selective disapproval of sexual irresponsibility, however. Women, the traditional enforcers of sexual morality, abandoned their posts in the 1960s and 1970s under the onslaught of the sexual revolution. It never has been men who took the lead in enforcing the sexual moral code. Left to their own devices, men apparently are programmed to prefer sex with as many women as possible. It has been the special province of women to civilize men and to ensure a stable and secure economic and social position for themselves and their offspring by guarding fiercely the sanctity of marriage.

Tolstoy speaks of this division of labor between the sexes in *Anna Karenina.* Anna abandons her husband and son and goes abroad to live openly with her lover, Count Vronsky. Vronsky feels tense whenever he and Anna meet new people about how the couple's illicit relations will be regarded. He finds, however, that "for the most part the men looked at it in the right way," though Vronsky is at a loss to explain what "in the right way" means. The women are another story. The couple avoids embarrassing situations abroad by exercising tact and, more important, "avoiding Russian ladies." When Anna and Vronsky return to Russia, she is publicly humiliated by a woman who ostentatiously refuses to sit next to her opera box. Her sister-in-law (but not her brother-in-law) declines to call upon Anna because to do so would ruin her own children's social position.

Needless to say, Anna and Vronsky would have no worries today. Not only is single motherhood no longer taboo, but women actually initiate most divorces. While a tragic few are

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

victims of physical or substance abuse by their husbands, a great many are victims of their own high, perhaps unrealistic, expectations about marriage. As one mother of two young children told a friend of mine, she had decided to divorce her reluctant husband because "the magic was gone."

To discourage divorce by making it less socially acceptable hinges in large part on changing the minds of women about the desirability of divorce as a solution to marital and personal woes and, most particularly, to persuade them again to subordinate their own personal dreams to the best interests of their children. The sad fact is, some people will be made unhappy by a cultural preference for keeping marriages together as opposed to encouraging divorces and fresh starts. The issue is whether the people who get hurt should be adults, who presumably bear some responsibility for the situations in which they find themselves, or children, who don't.

Any attempt to restore social disapproval for sexual moral violations immediately brings to mind Hester Prynne's scarlet letter or images of unsmiling, hard Victorian matrons turning pregnant housemaids out into the snow. But as Schlessinger reminds us, it is possible to show mercy and compassion to individuals and their circumstances while not condoning their behavior. It is also possible to exercise discretion and social hypocrisy in a manner that both accommodates and constrains human frailties.

In a recent article in the *New Republic*, writer Jonathan Rauch argued that disapproval of adultery serves important social policy objectives and thus should be preserved, even fortified. At the same time, adultery can, "if handled with the utmost tact by all parties concerned, provide a way to accommodate human nature to human convention with a reasonable minimum of collateral damage." Thus, he maintains, it is important that when it occurs, everyone either should lie or avert their eyes. But of course, as Rauch acknowledges, there is no incentive to lie unless the consequences of open acknowledgment are dire—including public embarrassment and even loss of a job or promotion.

While stigmatization of sexually irresponsible behavior is unlikely to be restored anytime soon, if ever, it is not too much to ask that we at least restore a modicum of discretion. Which brings me back to my dinner partner. The problem with people who flout traditional mores isn't so much that they do it, it's that they feel free and even entitled to demand approval for their behavior; they absolutely refuse to show any respect for the feelings and sensibilities of others who disagree.

A friend of mine and her husband, practicing Christians, are trying to teach their children that sex outside of marriage is wrong. So, they asked the husband's mother and her live-in boyfriend to stay in separate bedrooms when visiting my friends' home. They did not criticize the mother's cohabiting status in her own home, you understand, or ask that she visit without her boyfriend, or that she and her lover occupy separate rooms when my friends visit her (they stay in a hotel instead)—merely that grandma observe the house rules during the relatively few nights she spent in their home. Not only did she refuse, but she decided to terminate her visit early and left in a huff. For her, the demand for approbation took precedence over any respect for the sensibilities of her son and daughter-in-law, or the moral upbringing of her grandchildren.

Even worse, failure to condone sexual behavior one regards as morally wrong is often actually illegal. Many jurisdictions forbid discrimination on the basis of marital status. Thus, an employer could not refuse to hire a man known to have deserted his wife and children; a landlady cannot deny an apartment to a cohabiting couple.

With the law hostile to expressions of traditional morality and the culture still steeped in an ethos of self-expression, repairing broken families, rescuing vulnerable children, and arresting the ongoing slouch toward Gomorrah seem an uphill struggle. Nonetheless, to the extent there is any hope at all of arresting America's moral decay, conservative elites must take the lead not only in lamenting the consequences of the sexual revolution, but in actually enforcing a sense of shame. Enforcement, moreover, may mean more than judgmental gossip. It also may mean sanctions ranging from chilly social greetings to total social ostracism and even loss of a job.

At a minimum, however, even the fainthearted must demand good manners and a sense of discretion from those who do not adhere to traditional rules of sexual restraint. In this regard, as in so much else, we might look to Miss Manners for guidance. In these vulgar and chaotic times, she advocates reticence and ambiguity in morally problematic situations and, most important, respect for the sensibilities and courtesies of others. "Only then," she observes, "can we hope to restore the insult to its proper social function of expressing true distaste." ◆

Melinda Ledden Sidak is a Washington writer who serves on the IWF's National Advisory Board.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Which Are More Attractive: Left-Wing Women or Right-Wing Women?

From the right, ***David Brooks*** admits he finds liberal babes sexier...

BEING A RELATIVELY conservative woman with the tiresome habit of harping on the Ten Commandments, my wife has prohibited me from doing the extensive reporting I need to fully buttress my argument that liberal women are fantastic lovers. Nevertheless, relying on massive secondary research and close observation, I can assure you that if you ever get the chance to roll around on a futon with a woman of leftist leanings, you should definitely grab the opportunity. When I say "you," I obviously mean "you women." Men will also enjoy superior sex with liberal women, though of course the woman will be less into it.

You see, liberals, who do not normally embrace hierarchies, do have a hierarchy when it comes to sex. For liberals, the highest form of sex consists of ten female literary theorists sitting naked in a circle in a forest telling each other how beautiful their private parts are. The second highest form is a woman pleasuring herself alone in front of a mirror, and then writing a journal entry to be shared with her reading group. And at the bottom is regular heterosexual sex between a man and a woman.

Yet even at this lowest level, liberal sex is of a high caliber. Liberal women have many advantages over their right-wing sisters (even aside from the obvious, that left-wing women don't have cigar breath). For example, liberal women have adopted the absurd notion that female sex drives are as strong as male sex drives, which means that in order to live up to their creed, they have to put out like crazy. If a man meets resistance from a liberal mate, all he has to do is quietly muse, "I guess Naomi Wolf was wrong then...," and he will be happily lovemaking within thirty seconds.

Erotic paraphernalia companies advertise profusely in left-wing magazines, while right-wing magazines tend to run ads from companies that have discovered a sure-proof way to remove rodents from your yard. And this does signify the crucial mood advantage liberal women have in the intimate sphere. Conservative women, especially in educated circles, are constantly aware that they are swimming against a tide of feminist orthodoxy. This gives conservative heroines, like Margaret Thatcher, an admirable toughness, but you get the impression that even amidst a glorious spring sunset they'd be out whacking moles near the vegetable garden.

But liberal women are comfortable with the *zeitgeist*, so they can flow with the current, carrying themselves with a delightful playfulness and ease. You can be more candid with liberal women, using words and expressing sentiments that would produce a slap across the knuckles from the Victorian viragos that one sometimes finds on the right. Moreover, liberal women don't see themselves as part of a diminishing remnant charged with upholding the high standards of Western civilization. Liberal women aren't always judging you on your manners, and an afternoon with them is full of Frisbee and fun, not Emily Post and Oswald Spengler. The young liberal women of today take equality for granted. That's

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

actually the way today's men, even today's conservative men, have been raised. So you can behave naturally around a liberal woman, instead of constantly asking yourself, "Now how would Beau Brummel have handled this situation?" Finally, liberal women never begin sentences with, "As I said on MSNBC last week...."

I don't mean to suggest that left-wing women will provide frequent and fantastic intimacy without any negative considerations. The decline of reticence being what it is, liberal women can be embarrassingly loud during lovemaking. Moreover, while the feminist sex magazines treat the female orgasm with the sort of reverence they once reserved for the Russian revolution, they consider the male orgasm as vaguely fascistic. It can be easy to start having sex with a liberal woman, but politically incorrect to finish.

But the male conservative's great advantage is that liberal women have mostly been sleeping with liberal men—that is to say, timid, ineffectual, feminist men with blotches of randomly spaced chest hair who are so ashamed that they are not women themselves that they turn foreplay into an especially non-aggressive form of transcendental meditation. When a liberal woman is intimate with a virile Republican he-male, she will be overwhelmed by his awesome masculine vigor, and his electric, Decade-of-Greed style lustfulness.

So it's pretty clear liberal women offer a superior brand of erotic partnership. But as a conservative myself, I feel I should remind everyone of the virtues of chastity and abstinence, which is what I shall be practicing for six months after my wife reads this essay. ◆

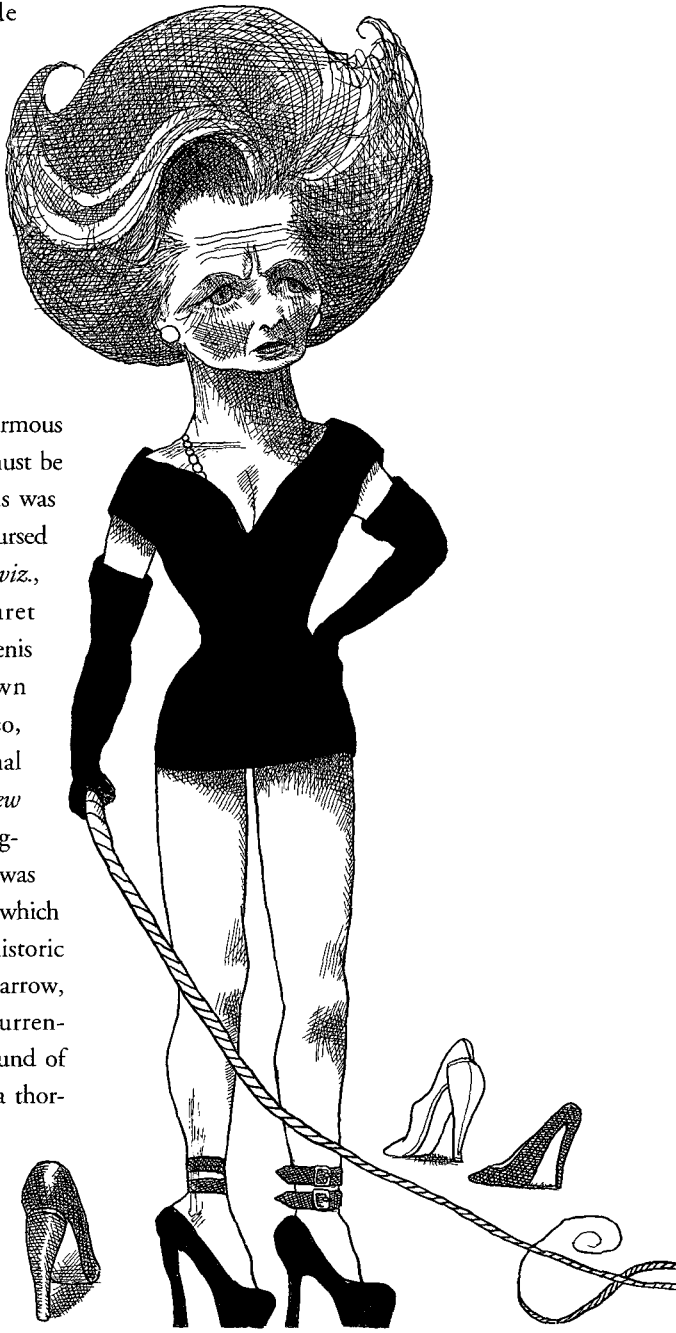
David Brooks is senior editor at the Weekly Standard, *and editor of the anthology,* Backward and Upward: The New Conservative Writing *(Vintage: 1996).*

...While from the left, *Christopher Hitchens* reveals his lust for Thatcher types

I HAVE NEVER been one of those on the left whose chief delight lies in displays of the "unpredictable." I like my knee to jerk, as I am fond of remarking, because it reassures me that my reflexes are in good order. (A failure to jerk, in other words, might represent a failure of nerve.) Every now and then, a bit of socialist fratricide breaks out and I like to be in the thick of it. But not for me the over-stuffed, chat-show chair where a week's reputation can be wrung from the "paradoxical" avowal that Charles Murray is onto something or that a "Star Wars" defense would deter Hamas or that "root causes" are a cop-out.

I did once, however, reap an enormous mailbag of the "Come off it; you must be kidding; get out of here" sort. This was when, in the *New Statesman*, I discoursed a bit on what was to me obvious, *viz.*, the sexual magnetism of Margaret Hilda Roberts, the second Mrs. Denis Thatcher and now a full-blown baroness. The year was 1977 or so, and she was still a very provisional Leader of the Opposition. At the *New Statesman*, which was then the flagship journal of the British left, it was easy to share in the prevalent view, which was that the Tories had made a historic mistake. By picking that "shrill, narrow, suburban housewife," they had surrendered the all-important middle ground of politics and set themselves up for a thorough trouncing as "extremists" and "ideologues." I had other reasons for thinking this opinion to be a mistaken one, but this article is not about my foresight. It's about my political libido.

You couldn't beat the British Conservative party as a man's club in those days (or indeed, alas, in these). And most of the senior leadership had not voted, on the first or the second round, for the lady who deposed Edward Heath. So she was stuck, for a goodish bit of time, with a load of red-faced paunches who thought she was



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the spawn of hell. And loyalty being a premium virtue in that party, she had to affect to think of them as wise and experienced colleagues. Yet, at the party conference and in Shadow Cabinet meetings and in Parliament, she regularly reduced these chaps to mush. It was at the annual conference that, as I stood in the body of the hall, it hit me. The feline smile, the composed but definite body-language, the voice at once stern and cajoling...to say nothing of the Valkyrie helmet of blond locks. My god! She has them in her thrall! And she knows it! The minx knows it! It was for writing this that I got into the hot water of what nobody then called political correctness.

Mark the sequel. Not long afterwards, I was at a reception in the Rosebery Room of the House of Lords. She came. (I'll try and keep this brief.) A mutual Tory friend offered to introduce us. I agreed with some alacrity. The subject of the moment was Rhodesia, now Zimbabwe. I held one view on this. She held another. The introduction was effected. Did I imagine it, or did she recognize the name of the scribe who had hymned her feminine allure? At once we were embroiled in an argument on the subject of racism and decolonization. I was (I only mention it) correct on my facts as well as my principles. She was lousy on both. But what a bonny fighter! She wouldn't give an inch. I found myself conceding her a trivial point, and bowing as I did so. She smiled.

"Bow lower," she said. Suddenly robbed of volition, I complied. "No—much lower." By now near to drowning in complicity and subjection, I obeyed. She withdrew from behind her back a rolled-up copy of the Parliamentary orders of the day, and gave me a sound smack before I could—how does one put this?—straighten up. I regained the perpendicular in some blushful confusion and difficulty, to see her swing away and look over her shoulder, the words "naughty boy" floating over me in my near trance-like state, as the journo witnesses closed in to say, "What was that all about?" I told them they would never understand, and—what do you know—they never did.

Once in office, she calmly destroyed and (if you will pardon the expression) dismembered all her male rivals, from Sir Geoffrey Howe to Nigel Lawson to Sir Ian Gilmour to Jim Prior, as well as a succession of Labour challengers. According to the biography by her loyal press officer, Sir Bernard Ingham, the first signal that someone was finished was the fluted question: "Shall we withdraw our love?" She also, incidentally, took my advice, and reversed herself completely on Rhodesia. None of her triumphs astonished me.

The purpose of this somewhat sticky prologue is to introduce the more delicate question, Does the conservative woman possess a special attraction beyond her own wing, or faction? To stay with Thatcher for a moment—and I don't want you to think I'm obsessed with her, or anything like that—an instant answer was first confected by her opponents. She had charisma and potency, agreed, but it wasn't feminine. She was really a man. In the words of a gazillion tiresome jokes, she was the only one with balls. How people talked themselves into this I don't know, but talk themselves into it they did. You can look it up.

Paradoxically—I knew I'd get here sooner or later—this mirrored or borrowed from traditional reactionary propaganda against radical women. Louise Michel, Rosa Luxemburg, at least two of the Pankhursts, and many others were written off either as mannish and thwarted or secretly Sapphist. And sexually "free" or emancipated types like Alexandra Kollontai and Emma Goldman were denounced as sluts. (Thatcher has at least been spared the last two of these imputations.) Rudyard Kipling's "The Female of the Species," probably among his top three poems in point of quotability, insinuated the same idea in the maddening form of a heavily sarcastic compliment, but struck close to the mark by suggesting that the latent superiority of women lay in their childbearing role.

If they can't get you one way, as females down the ages have had cause to reflect, they'll get you in another. The alternative model of the "progressive" woman was that of the simpering, prissy type: too squeamish for war or capitalism and inclined to be schoolmarm-like. (Some crossover, in the latter suggestion, with Sapphism. But only some.) To take a wearisome current example, see how the First Lady is variously described by her foes as a boss bitch and a bleeding-heart. I'm coming back to her. Add to this constant suspicion—actually affirmed by some feminists—that men are intellectual and rational while women are emotional and nurturing, and you have the outline of the problem. What is a tough-minded, free-market, heterosexual woman to do, except be tough-minded, free-market, and heterosexual? Is there a style? Ought there even to be a style? If I were a conservative, I'm sure I would say not.

But here I must have done with the throat-clearing and foot-shuffling. The trifles that I composed in honor of Mrs. T. were as nothing, in terms of their outrage-the-comrades effect, to the roar of anger that greeted the avowals that Alexander Cockburn and I made about Jeane Kirkpatrick in the *Nation*. Never mind for now that I thought then, and think now, of Jeane as a death-squad groupie and a coiner of euphemisms for dictatorship. Never mind, either, that on the matter of the Falklands, she was Thatcher's most sedulous foe. To watch her on television or in person was to see someone who enjoyed dialectic for its own sake, who strove to define the argument rather than squelch about in a pacifying "middle

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ground," who had convictions rather than opinions but who also, and here I take the plunge, could be deliciously aware of her sex. She made Phyllis Schlafly look like a faggot. And she also showed the superiority of the pseudo-intellectual over the anti-intellectual. By this I mean, to phrase it simply, that you just can't imagine Jeane Kirkpatrick commencing a sentence with the words, "As a woman, I feel..."

The cross-dressing appeal of conservative women for radical men is buried in there somewhere. Thanks to certain ephemeral "movement" ethics, a number of our guys had every chance to get a touch bored with people—of any sex and of none—who started with their identity and continued with their feelings. Don't tell me who you are—I can see that. And don't tell me how you feel—tell me how you *think*. We Marxists go by the content, not of your character, but of your cerebellum. And we don't mind scar tissue if it's been honorably incurred.

That's why so many of us wish we'd met Jessica Mitford when she was young. Not, I hasten to add, that we weren't her pliant tools when she was in her seventies. She would tell broad jokes in male company, she quaffed, she smoked, she had faced down cops and bullies, she was screamingly witty, and she had done all her reading and homework. Dressy she wasn't. But drop-dead elegant. And cross her—no thank you. Her claws would be across your face and back in her lap before you could notice it. The healing would come with the next limerick. Withal, a perfect mother, an ideal sister, an adored wife, and (not her fault) an exemplary widow. There was no feminine part that she had not filled to perfection. If she and Ayn Rand had ever met, Nathaniel Branden would have needed Miss Rand's dental records even sooner than he actually did.

I mention the late and beloved "Decca" because I realize that I've given a hostage to fortune. The thrill of cruelty isn't absolutely indispensable to one's make-up or vulnerability, whatever you may have read about the education of the English male. When I first met Laura Ingraham, she was brought by Dinesh D'Souza as his luncheon guest—in the White House mess, as it happens, on the only occasion I dined or expect to dine there—and she rather offset his Thomist subtlety and discretion by thundering on about her adventures in El Salvador and inquiring boldly about one's marital status. OK, I remember thinking, I get the point. You can be female and feminine and assertive, and, so to speak, right-wing. (Good grief, how many times does that of all points need hammering home?)

Hillary Clinton began life as a "Goldwater Girl," distributing those cute little AuH_2O stickers around her bourgeois neighborhood in Illinois and generally being the perfect white-toothed, hair-banded little brat of the 1964 GOP rally. I can't help feeling that she'd have been better off staying right there, and would probably have made a happier marriage and met a nicer class of people. Thanks partly to her, though, the whole idea of the political woman has become indissolubly linked to the preachy, the righteous, the health-conscious, and the wholesomely interfering. If conservative women want to elicit low, helpless growls from our side or any other, and this is only a suggestion for heaven's sake, then they must cease to wave their babies about, cease to speak about gender gaps, cease to be "inclusive," and instead flaunt what makes them different—their attachment to ideas. I still have the reading lists that Decca sent me. Which Tory minx, of her prey, will be able to say the same? ◆

Christopher Hitchens is a columnist for the Nation *and* Vanity Fair. *His most recent book,* The Missionary Position: Mother Teresa in Theory and Practice, *is published in paperback by Verso.*

We Didn't Mean Paying *Those* Dues!

THE GREAT ADVOCATES of equal pay for working women lose a lot of their ideological zeal when it comes to paying working women out of their own pockets.

A source tells TWQ *that for the past year,* Ms., Working Woman, *and* Working Mother *magazines have owed freelance writers (the bulk of them female, natch) some $70,000 in fees. The writers have badgered the publications for payment, but as yet have received nothing.*

The problem arose in June, 1996, when MacDonald Communications bought the magazines from Lang Communications. MacDonald then refused to pay any of Lang's previous debt, which was in the millions and included the writers' fees.

Finally, in September, the National Writers Union threatened to stage a protest outside the Work/Family Congress gala awards dinner in New York where MacDonald paradoxically planned to honor the hundred best companies for working mothers.

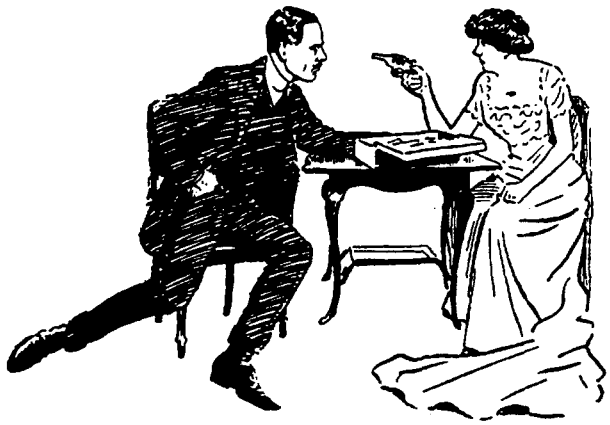
The company hastily agreed to a settlement of sorts—a better contract for freelance writers in the future—but not before its lawyers threatened to sue the union for defamation and "product disparagement." The demonstration was called off.

So much for sisterhood. ◆

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

And Above All, Lighten Up

Americans approach dating like a job interview, complains *Jonathan Foreman*



People back in my homeland of England often ask me if American women are as sexually aggressive as they have heard. British males who don't really know this country are convinced that American women are all fierce, perpetually complaining feminists who throw themselves at men with startling force and frequency. "Is it true they just come up to you in bars and ask you to sleep with them?" one fellow asked, his eyes goggling.

The truthful answer is, "Uh, not usually." American women are no more likely to be sexually hyperactive than their British counterparts; in fact, British women are a far better bet if you meet them at a bar. (Surveys have shown that the Brits are the most promiscuous nation in Western Europe—far more so than the French, for all their talk.) Despite this society's openness about sex, American women often have remarkably frustrating sex lives. This is not because American women are in any way prudish. On the contrary. It is mainly because the rules of "dating" wreak such havoc on relations between the sexes.

I have lived in this country for a decade, my father was American, I spent all my school vacations in California, and I still don't really understand what Americans mean by "dating." It is hard to believe, I know, but we simply don't have "dating" in England. This is not as strange as it sounds. We still have sex lives; we still marry and have children. Indeed, we have successfully done all these things for centuries. This is also true for people in all the hundreds of other countries where no one "dates." In fact, so far as I know, "dating"—whatever it is—scarcely exists outside the United States.

For example, I once heard one of my American female colleagues say, "I'm dating three guys right now, nothing serious." I was stunned. She seemed like such a reticent creature. Could she really be sleeping with three men simultaneously? A friend explained she was not sleeping with them, she was merely "dating" them—in other words going out to dinner with them. I asked this friend—a lawyer—if that meant that any time a man has dinner with a women they are on a date. Not at all, she explained. For a dinner to be a date, there has to be *romantic intent.* At this point I thought I understood dating. It was a kind of reconnaissance made in a restaurant before two people embarked on a relationship; no carnal activity was involved except eating.

But there are many times when the context is less clear. If I meet an unmarried woman and she tells me that she has been dating someone for three weeks, or three years, what does she mean? Is she single or not? (As a European, I would be quite happy to treat all attractive women as potential lovers—I was brought up to look at a woman's eyes not her ring finger—but as I live here I would prefer to avoid misunderstandings.)

There are a host of ancillary questions, all of which depend on correct interpretation of this mysterious concept. How do I know if a lunch, dinner, or drink with a woman constitutes a "date"? Many American women feel they should not sleep with you, or in extreme cases, even kiss you, until the second or third "date." Yet some women don't count a dinner as a date if she has invited the man out, or if neither person has used the actual phrase, "It's a date." More quaintly, others require the man to pay for the woman if the occasion is to count as a "date." (Presumably such women see dating as a transaction that is partly financial: Each of the three dates is an installment paid in advance. The man's return takes the form of what lawyers call consortium: a combination of company, domestic work, and sexual favors.) One could go on. What I want to know is how many dates have to take place before you can say you are "dating" someone? When should "dating" someone imply exclusivity? And can you sleep with a woman without "dating" her?

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

This last goes to the root of what is wrong with the idea of "dating." For the foreigner, the whole weird system with its vagueness and simultaneous rigidity speaks to a linguistic shortage. Americans simply don't have enough words to describe all the variations of sexual relationships. And they are uncomfortable in relationships that are not easily defined by phrases like "engaged to," "one-night stand," or "going out with." This is especially true of American women who are well known to enjoy long, late-night conversations during which they and their consorts endeavor to define and describe their Relationship.

The confused notion of the "date" stems in large part from its origins in a 1950s suburban mating ritual. The original date was essentially a way of formalizing fraternization in an era when arranged marriages were old-fashioned, chaperones were impractical, and automobiles allowed teenagers to escape parental discipline.

The basic idea was that the teenage boy would ask his father if he could borrow the family car for a "date." The boy would then drive the car to the girl's house where he would be introduced to and interrogated by her father. He would promise to drive his date home at a reasonable hour and he'd then take the girl to a movie, a coffee shop, or a dance. In an era when people married young, you were only supposed to date someone if the relationship had a chance of "going somewhere." A date was presumed to be the first step on the road to marriage. Hence parental disapproval if their child dated somebody from the wrong race or class.

We never developed the dating system in England because we couldn't afford cars in the 1950s, or suburbs for that matter. And English cars, for all their elegance, were either too small and uncomfortable for sex, or driven only by the chauffeur. So as the sexual revolution spread, we developed a system so fluid and practical it is barely a system at all.

I really came to understand it as a student at Cambridge in the early 1980s. First of all, everyone drank a great deal (but not beer) and flirted all the time. I would have dinner (or lunch, tea, or drinks) with female friends. Sometimes we would sleep together afterwards. With some girls this became a regular event. With other girls you would sleep with them only once, but continue to see them as friends. With still others, the friendship would always be platonic. It was only when you started to have sex with someone regularly that the nomenclature of your relationship became important. And the questions were: Was this an affair, should you try to keep it secret, or would you start "going out"? It was simple, and great fun.

And it continued when we all moved to London and started jobs, except that about a quarter of the people I knew married within three years of graduation. Three years later another quarter were hitched. After a decade, three quarters if not more of my contemporaries have tied the knot, proving that the English model makes for both happy single people and coupling off at a reasonably young age. It is New York, and not London, that is prowled by thousands of anxious thirty-something men and women, all nervously watching their mirrors for signs of decreasing value.

The dating system may have worked well in 1950s suburbia, but it doesn't work in big cities today. Politically correct puritanism is one reason. Human mating rituals conducted without the benefit of drinking, smoking, and dancing are either joylessly crude or excessively calculated. Without flirtation, they become very dreary indeed. And these days flirting is a dying art. Badly executed flirtation can cost you your career and may land you in court.

Also, in the golden age of the 1950s, people who "dated" usually knew each other from their co-ed high school, or by parental introduction. Questions of suitability were therefore settled long before the actual "date," the main point of which seems to have been to test sexual chemistry. Today, "dating" frequently involves asking someone very boring, bureaucratic questions about their career, their family, and interests.

Blind dates are the worst date of all, essentially a job interview with your sexual self-esteem at stake. And they can wreck your relationships with the people who set you up. Not only might your date reject you out of hand, but when you see her you instantly know what league your friends think you are in. It's like reading about yourself in someone's journal.

So the answer is not to "date." Ask people out to dinner. Go out for coffee in the afternoon. Don't only ask people who are suitable, and don't think of it as "step one" in some kind of scientific experiment. Your oldest and best friend could be the one for you, or your boss. That is what romance is all about: spontaneity, adventure—all things incompatible with "dating." America has given the world many wonderful things, from the cheeseburger to freedom from the Nazis. But "dating" isn't one of them. ◆

Jonathan Foreman is a contributing editor of the City Journal *in New York.*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Interview

The Little Lady Who Started a Great Big Revolution

Becky Garrison interviews *Helen Gurley Brown*

Until her retirement from Cosmopolitan *earlier this year, Helen Gurley Brown was among the most influential proponents of the sexual revolution. Her best-selling 1962 book,* Sex and the Single Girl, *launched the carefree, happy-go-lucky attitude to Sex! Sex! Sex!—as she might put it—that overtook American women of that generation. Named editor-in-chief of* Cosmo *three years later, she would oversee the revolution month by month for the next thirty-two years: encouraging her millions of female readers not to be "mouseburgers," offering how-tos for guiltless, magnificent orgasms, and nitty-gritty advice on how to snag a man—even if he was already married—and keep him satisfied in bed. Over the years, feminists have attempted to disown her for her unabashed admiration of men and her encouragement of a rather trampish style of femininity. But Brown in fact has been the women's movement's most effective propagandist for love unhampered by commitment and the responsibilities of children and marriage. And she is unrepentant.*

Helen Gurley was born in 1922, in Green Forest, Arkansas. She began her career as a secretary at an advertising firm, where she eventually became a copywriter. She married David Brown, a Hollywood producer, when she was thirty-seven. Under her reign at Cosmo, *circulation rose to nearly three million. It is now published in twenty-nine editions around the world. She is the author of numerous other books including* Sex and the Office *and* Having It All. *Brown was inducted into the Publisher's Hall of Fame in 1988.*

Becky Garrison interviewed Brown in her new office at Cosmopolitan International Editions, where she is editor-in-chief. She was dressed in an elegant black knit dress. In person she is petite, soft-spoken, and girlishly charming.

THE WOMEN'S QUARTERLY: What made you write *Sex and the Single Girl?*

HELEN GURLEY BROWN: People were sexually involved and were not married. We always knew it was happening to men, but presumably girls were virginal until they were married. But they were not virginal until they married, at least not after World War II, but people were still pretending they were. So I came out with my little book and I didn't interview hundreds of people. I just wrote about myself and other young friends of mine and what we were doing.

The book was on the best-seller list for twenty-six weeks. I got hundreds of letters from women all over the country. All these women thought they had a new best friend because I actually said that if they were having sex, don't feel guilty about it because everyone else was doing it.

TWQ: People say you're the founder of the sexual revolution. Is that accurate?

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

HGB: It's not totally accurate. Women started being emancipated sexually during and after World War II. By 1945, when the men came back from overseas, some had sexual reunions with the girls who were waiting for them. More important, a lot of women had taken jobs with defense plants, shipyards, and so on. Since they weren't dependent on men for their livelihood, they were emancipated sexually. Women who got the rent money from their husbands couldn't afford to do anything to make their husbands mad by having sex with somebody else.

In addition, the [birth control] pill was perfected in the 1950s. Before then, you didn't refrain from sex just because you might be considered a bad girl; you might also get pregnant, and abortion was illegal. In the forties and fifties, you were really scared to death of the consequences of sex.

What I did was simply report on what was happening. Whether I actually encouraged women to go out there and have sex if they weren't already doing so, I'm not sure. I was certainly accused of doing that by the Bible-belt people. They thought I was a scarlet woman creating other scarlet women.

TWQ: What attitude did you bring to *Cosmopolitan* when you took it over?

HGB: The stance of *Cosmo* from the beginning was to say that sex was a wonderful happening. That was my personal viewpoint. I wasn't pushing anybody to have sex. That's your decision. However, since some of us think sex is such a wonderful happening, if you're not enjoying it—if you're having a bad time—maybe you ought to talk it over with somebody else and see if there's a problem. Again, [my attitude was] if you're celibate, that's your business. If you're with one partner your entire life, that's your business. But *Cosmo* celebrates the relationship between men and women, married and not married, and sex is part of that equation.

It was tough to come up with articles [on sex] every month because sex hasn't changed much—the basic act of sex is the same as it was three or four thousand years ago, I imagine; I wasn't there but one would *glean*. So, finding something new to write about sex every month was a challenge. In one issue, we would write about what to do if your sex drive is greater than his, the next if his sex drive is greater than yours. Another month it was, "Is everyone having more sex than you are? How do you know? Are you missing something?" Another month it might have been for divorced women with children and what to do when your boyfriend sleeps over. Or how to be very good in bed.

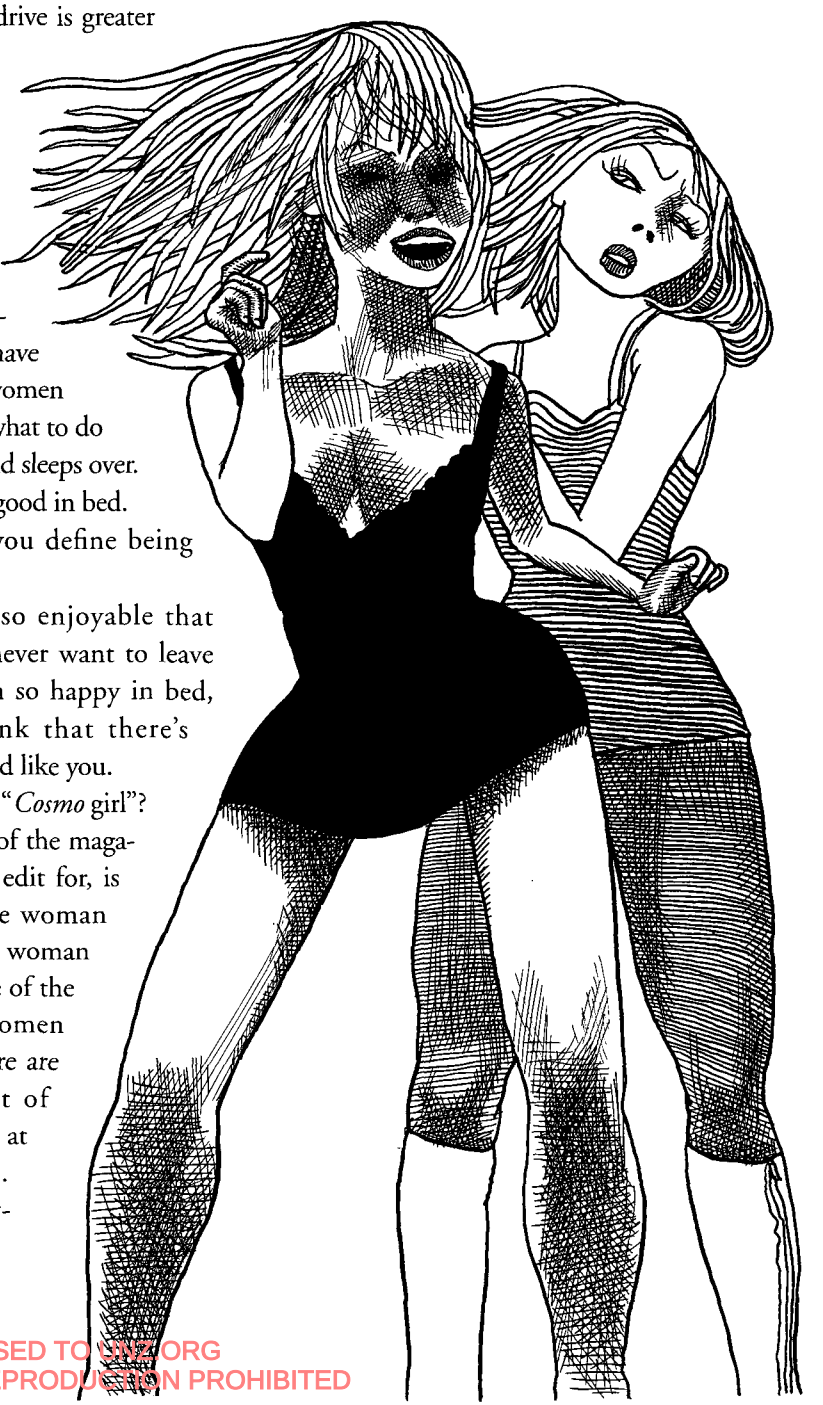
TWQ: How do you define being good in bed?

HGB: It's being so enjoyable that [your lover] will never want to leave you—making him so happy in bed, making him think that there's nobody in the world like you.

TWQ: Who is the "*Cosmo* girl"?

HGB: The reader of the magazine, the person I edit for, is not necessarily the woman on the cover. The woman on the cover is one of the most beautiful women in the world. There are only about eight of them in the world at any given time. They're the tippy-top, world-famous, professional models, and they're gorgeous. Our reader is a young women between the ages of eighteen and thirty-four who loves men, who loves children, and is traditional in many ways. But she does not get her identity from another person. She's not just a mother, a sister, a wife, a girlfriend—she wants to be known for what she does. That's always been *Cosmo*'s formula because love and work are equally important.

TWQ: Do you think the *Cosmo* woman has changed since 1965?



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

HGB: Not at all. I was editing for the same woman then that I was in my last issue, thirty-two years later. What changed were the possibilities for women professionally. The work world changed. It's been wonderful to watch it happen. There isn't any field that a woman can't enter now. And the feminist movement has been a raging success with that, but they've got a long way to go.

TWQ: What do you think of women who eschew the use of make-up and wear clothes that are unflattering?

HGB: What if a man went around unshaven with a frayed collar and jeans? Sure, he's probably got a great character but I want him to look good. Part of it is that he cares about what I think about him. And you want men to think well of you.

The feminists in the late seventies wore these charcoal gray turtleneck sweaters and no make-up, but I never went along with that. I want people to think I look nice. Looking pretty and wearing nice clothes says that I care about how I look. There have been some studies that show the most beautiful people always get the most attention. They get the best jobs, they don't get fired as quickly, and people trust them. Looks are still legal tender.

TWQ: So, it's your desire to have women looking good so they can advance in the work world?

HGB: That's part of the equation. But looking good is also being purposely attractive to men. The better you look, the better chance you have. There have always been standards of beauty. Clearly the standards change a lot from century to century, but they've always been there. We're rather blessed now that there are so many things like cosmetic surgery to fix problems.

TWQ: Some people have expressed concern over models who look unhealthily thin, like Kate Moss, and their influence over teenage girls.

HGB: Kate Moss was always healthy, and she was depicted in Calvin Klein ads as virtually anorexic. We had her on the cover of *Cosmo* at the same time she was doing these ads. She looked adorable and delicious.

Indeed, there exist such things as bulimia and anorexia and they're serious. But these are mental conditions not brought upon by the modeling or the fashion industry. They are really emotional problems. Anorexics are women with no self-esteem, and they fault their families for that. However, we've gone further than we should in convincing people with certain body types that they are acceptable. In my opinion, they are unacceptable if they are forty pounds overweight.

TWQ: Let's talk about men. In *Sex and the Single Girl*, you noted that the male sex is not monogamous.

HGB: In general, men are warriors who are supposed to spread their seed. Women with their vaginas are supposed to create a new being. Once pregnant, a woman can only have one seed inside of her.

TWQ: Do you think women have the same sexual needs as men?

HGB: We began to catch up when birth control became safer. And when women have their own work, they can be more selective sexually.

TWQ: You've said that it was good for a single woman to use married men as "pets." Why?

HGB: I think if a woman says, "Oh, I never have sex unless I'm really in love," that's not reasonable. My experience is that you have several men in your life. Having sex with one person, if it's a good person, is probably better than having more than one sex partner. After breaking up, you don't find the next great love affair very quickly. To get through the days and nights and sadness, there is the potential for a married man or two. I always caution against falling in love with a married man. You're expecting him to leave his wife. So I say, "If you just keep them as pets, they can come in handy."

When I was a Los Angeles girl working at an ad agency, a man from the New York office would come out. He had a wild expense account and stayed at one of the Beverly Hills hotels. I was a little girl making $25 a week and I got wined and dined. I would try and be a little bit grown up and not think that these men were the real world. In *Sex and the Single Girl*, I mentioned two or three married men in my life. When those men recognized themselves in the book, they were horrified because they thought they were the only one.

TWQ: What about their wives?

HGB: People always ask, "Don't you worry about the wife?" I said, "No, I'm a wife. If I can't keep my husband on the reservation, that's my problem." But I'm not worried about wives. I do not feel that marriage is a sacrament between a man and a woman. I feel that marriage is a wonderful state with the right person. I didn't marry until I was thirty-seven and had lots of sexual experiences before that time. And I've been able to stay faithful, and I've kept him faithful all these years.

I started to talk about this on the "Today" show the other day. Katie Couric was horrified. She just thinks it's *ghastly* that I would say that anybody should have anything to do with a married man. I said that she's got an *awfully* cute husband.

If I were a wife whose husband was cheating, I might have a different outlook.

TWQ: How do you respond to those

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

who feel that sex outside of marriage is a sin and that sex with a married person is adultery?

HGB: I think that sex with someone you're not married to is fine and pleasurable. The only reason I can see for folks objecting is religious reasons—*sin.* The word sin is not in my vocabulary.

TWQ: Were you brought up with religion?

HGB: I was a student of religion. I got away from that. As a kid, I went to church, Sunday School, Christian Endeavor [an inter-denominational Sunday night youth service], and sang in the church choir. I was what you'd call devoutly religious from thirteen to eighteen. My sister got polio when she was nineteen. To this day, she is still in a wheelchair. At twenty I quit believing in God. If there was a God, how could this happen to my sister? I'm an atheist now. I don't pray. If prayer works for you, fine.

So, back to sin. If you think it's a sin to have sex with a person you're not married to—fine. Let it be a sin. Infidelity would hurt me very much if it happened to my family. I mean, if someone is leaving your bed to go into someone else's bed—*woof!* But it's up to me and my family. I married a man I thought was faithful. I picked a man I thought I could trust.

TWQ: How did you meet him?

HGB: We were introduced by a mutual friend. I knew he was attractive. He was divorcing his second wife and on the market. I asked my girlfriend if she'd fix us up. She said, "Not now." He was a movie executive and was in his starlet phase—dating Deborah Kerr and all. After a year, she called and said, "It's time." She set up a dinner and we took off from there.

TWQ: What attracted *him* to you?

HGB: One thing was that I paid cash for a Mercedes-Benz. I'd been saving money for years and cleaned out my bank account. He'd never dated a woman who paid cash for a box of bobby pins. Here was this bright young person who bought a car all by herself.

After we had been together for a year, I explained that I wanted to get married. I was old enough. He'd been married twice but I hadn't been married at all. Eventually, he gave in and we've been married ever since.

TWQ: What's your reaction to snagging a husband as outlined in the recent best-seller, *The Rules?*

HGB: It's a very relevant and well-written book. I bought a chapter for *Cosmo.* Some of the rules are very good, like don't have lingering conversations on the phone and don't hog the conversation. Some of the other rules are too conservative. You *do* have to be friendly and talk to strangers. And they're a little prissy regarding sex. I think they're writing to girls who always get pushed around. Let's just say they're too stuffy for me.

TWQ: Do you think *The Rules,* and its popularity, represents something of a backlash against the sexual revolution?

HGB: No, I don't think so. *The Rules* are talking about women who are doormats. They're just too desperate and will do *anything* to accommodate the man. This doesn't have anything to do with sexual freedom necessarily. It's okay to play hard to get if someone is trying to get you. But if someone isn't after you, then you have to learn how to be accommodating. This is not the *Cosmo* girl. She is someone who is making every effort to be charming, considerate, thoughtful, and a good person. So to be overly snippy and aloof to get a man—this isn't the way she's going to play it.

TWQ: You are one of former Senator Bob Packwood's few defenders. [Bob Packwood resigned from the Senate after being accused of sexual harassment.]

HGB: The other half of my opinion that rarely gets attention was that I think he was an idiot—a silly man to make sexual advances towards women, who didn't want him or find him attractive. *Yuck!*

On the other hand, I don't think it was a mortal sin. How much harm did it really do to them? We fought so hard to be sexual equals and not thought of as bimbos. We came a long way and now we say, "You're a fragile thing. You'll topple off a pedestal if a man breathes down your neck"—*ridiculous.*

If anything is keeping you from getting the advancement you deserve, that's reprehensible. So, if you're denied a job you deserve because you won't sleep with the boss—there are cases like this—that's the time to see an attorney, the human resources department, or to talk with him. If someone rapes you, they should go to prison. I'm not talking about that—I'm talking about innuendoes and passes made by someone you don't like.

TWQ: Finally, how did you feel about turning over the reins of *Cosmo?*

HGB: It's weird. The magazine was an extension of my psyche. It was my credo. In terms of ego, it was gratifying. Anything I wanted to do an article on, I could do. So, I miss the power and influence of putting out a product.

Now, I'm simply too old to be editing a magazine for thirty-three-year-old women. This is called *life.* ◆

Becky Garrison is a contributing editor to the Door *magazine and a playwright in New York.*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Real Reason Feminists Won't Defend Paula Jones

She turns a feminist heroine into a sexual victim, writes *Noemie Emery*

WHAT'S THIS? ONE small-town female accuses the most powerful man in the world of trying to press her for sexual favors. And the feminists, friends of the poor and women, side with...the powerful man. Not just this, but the charter members of the Anita Hill fan club proceed to dump on the woman—to question her past, her motives, and her morals; to imply she's a liar and a tramp. Sisterhood becomes conditional: Patricia Schroeder is too busy to bother with Jones; Patricia Ireland questions her backers; Susan Estrich doubts Bill is the type; Betty Friedan insists Bill Clinton's sex life is "his business" and harrumphs that this is all a "diversion. I abhor the use of a sexual issue in this way." Ellen Goodman agrees. "I know if Bill were just another Joe, [Paula Jones] would have trouble getting a lawyer," she states. "It's not even clear if her version fits the charges of harassment, or the 'intentional infliction of emotional distress.'" Suddenly, the personal is no longer political, at least not in Paula Jones' case.

What caused the women's groups to abandon her?

Two explanations have been put forth, neither convincing. One is the issue of class. Anita Hill, a law professor, was at home in the courts, and spoke legalese perfectly. Paula Jones, on the other hand, is Melanie Griffith in the movie *Working Girl* before her self-induced transformation: all big hair, short skirts, and a nasal honk of an accent—the sort of girl who regards feminists pityingly as plain women who can't get a date.

But class alone won't do: Does anyone doubt Jones' class would have been an issue if she'd happened to go after Newt? But politics doesn't explain feminist diffidence, either. Feminists criticized Ted Kennedy and Gary Hart and, though they for a long time defended their ally, Bob Packwood, in the end they turned on him, too. In 1979 and 1987, feminist journalist Suzannah Lessard savaged Ted Kennedy and Gary Hart, calling their conduct an affront to the dignity and equality of women, claiming it made them unfit for high office. As she wrote in *Newsweek* in 1987, "A feminist sensibility had seeped into the public consciousness sufficiently to make philandering appear to many at best unattractive, maybe unacceptable, and possibly even alarming where the candidate's emotions and psychology are concerned." But in the case of Bill Clinton, it has not seeped in deeply enough, and perhaps never will. Why not? What does he have that the others were lacking?

The answer, in short: Those other

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

men were not married to Hillary Clinton. It is *she* the women's groups are trying to save.

Whenever the First Lady comes under attack, for whatever reason, women's groups will often defend her as a "strong woman" in a society that cannot accept "strong women" in public life. But there are many strong women who are popular with the public, many of them Republican women. Marilyn Quayle is as strong, as involved in the public life of her husband, as Hillary Clinton. Lynne Cheney is as outspoken, and Wendy Gramm as brainy, as their respective mates. Elizabeth Dole—Duke '58—is even more the trailblazer and rebel. Mrs. Dole had an independent career of her own before her marriage and served in the cabinets of two men not her husband. Mrs. Clinton early on merged her career with her husband's and has never held any political power that did not come directly from him.

But these are not accomplishments modern feminism cares much about any longer. Movement feminism is more deeply interested these days in the assault on sex roles than female accomplishment in a man's world. "A feminist, as I use the word, questions the gender arrangements in society and culture...and works to change them," says feminist scholar Carolyn Heilbrun. "I believe that our future salvation lies in a movement away from sexual polarization and the prison of gender, toward a world in which individual roles and the modes of personal behavior can be freely chosen. Androgyny seeks to liberate the individual from the confines of the appropriate...[and] defines a condition under which the character of the sexes, and human impulses expressed by men and women, are not rigidly assigned."

Mrs. Clinton may be no more accomplished than Mmes. Dole, Gramm, or Cheney; but she is surely a far more androgynous figure, whose war on the traditionally feminine, especially when she was younger, has been intense. "In [her college] days," wrote Connie Bruck, in her *New Yorker* profile of the First Lady, "Hillary Rodham seemed disinclined to modify her persona. She apparently never considered her appearance a coin in which to trade. She certainly did not rely on it to win others' affirmation, and she made no concessions to it. She used no makeup, wore immensely thick glasses...and seemed to pay little attention to her clothes."

Elizabeth Dole, by comparison, has made something of a career of flirting, and can seduce an audience; her drive is always offset with a tinkling Southern laugh and smooth manner. Hillary Clinton, according to Bruck, was called "hard-edged" and "intimidating" by peers in high school and college. She quotes a colleague in Arkansas as calling her "one very tough professional bitch." Peer as she is, Elizabeth Dole does not overpower her husband. Mrs. Dole's message is that drive and ambition can go along with a female persona and the traditional male-female balance. Mrs. Clinton's is that this balance should be reversed and overthrown. It was this last that drew all the feminist plaudits, as the Clinton marriage evolved into myth. "He couldn't keep his mind—or his eyes—from wandering over to the smart girl in the flannel shirt and thick glasses," gushed Margaret Carlson in *Time*, evoking the Clinton courtship. In 1992, the Clinton marriage became a key issue in a dull campaign season: the old vs. new woman, the old vs. new husband, the old vs. new marriage, the homemaker vs. the breadwinner lawyer.

For women's groups, there was no question which was the superior model. For them, Hillary Clinton promised release, not just from the kitchen and from low expectations, but from the whole context of feminine principle: the need to look good and talk softly, to serve as a balance to masculine striving, to live as a bearer of beauty and comfort. They forgave Hillary Clinton her first transformation—the cynical move to blonde hair and prim dresses—because she did it for all the "right" reasons: as part of her drive to gain and hold power, a move to win voters, and not to please men. To please men—or to want to—was the ultimate no-no, the first link in a chain of patriarchal oppressions. Bill Clinton, too, became a hero to feminists when he was quoted as saying that when he chose Hillary, he was going for brains and ability rather than glamor, and defending her to his family by saying he didn't want to marry a beauty queen (Elizabeth Dole was a beauty queen). He wanted to marry the smartest girl in the class.

But at the same time he courted the girl in thick glasses, Bill Clinton had a different side. "Bill...always had a weakness for bleached blondes with big jewelry, in short skirts, their figures shown off to the best advantage," Connie Bruck quotes an Arkansan saying. "Gennifer [Flowers] was credible to us because she looked the part."

It is the emergence of Paula and Gennifer into the androgynous world of the Clintons' political marriage that throws a wrench into the feminist myth. These women are not androgynists, interested in breaking down prisons of gender. They do not even think there *are* such prisons.

The Hart and Kennedy scandals

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

made sense to feminists because they hurt wives involved in traditional marriages—those who had set themselves up to be victims, or, as Ann Grimes quotes one feminist in her book about the 1988 election, *Running Mates*, "colluders," "doormats," and "dupes." They asked for it, Grimes went on, by accepting years of "inherited deference," becoming housewives, not lawyers and feminists, not "Geraldine Ferraro...not Ellie Smeal." Or Hillary Clinton. To a Hillary Clinton these things could not happen. But they could happen, and did.

As Grimes writes, Lee Hart's behavior—her continued support of her husband's ambitions—enraged feminist women and puzzled the press. But Mrs. Clinton's reactions are eerily similar, expressed often in much the same words.

"By the time Gary had decided to run for president, Lee had made a significant twenty-four year investment in his future," Gail Sheehy tells us. "Lee seemed clearly to want the White House as much as Gary did. That would explain why she was willing to be humiliated...and ignored." Mrs. Clinton was "devastated and humiliated...but said to have determined she would not leave the marriage in which she had invested so heavily," Connie Bruck tells us. "She had invested too much in Bill Clinton," adds David Maraniss, Clinton's biographer. Ann Grimes cites Gary Hart's "hollow words"—"She has always believed in me, and she has a remarkable ability to detach her relationship with me as my wife from my roles as candidate for the Senate and the presidency"—as especially demeaning to women. But, as Bruck quotes Clinton's Arkansas chief of staff Betsey Wright saying about Hillary Clinton, "She knows it's there, knows it hurts, knows it's wrong, but she controls it as a separate thing from what the goal or project is."

By feminist lights, the exquisite Jacqueline Kennedy, who once breathlessly defined the First Lady's job as "taking care of the president," is also a victim. But Mrs. Kennedy managed to control her image, her life, and even her husband in ways Mrs. Clinton cannot. "She didn't like Jack's fooling around," Christopher Andersen quoted former Senator George Smathers in the book, *Jack and Jackie*. "She was damned mad about it. But she was willing to look the other way as long as he was careful. Jackie could not stand the idea of people pitying her or making fun of her. She didn't like being made to look like a fool."

Bill Clinton, of course, has never been careful, and today his wife is ridiculed widely. (John Kennedy never asked his wife to defend his failings in public. What would she have done if he had?) The woman Mrs. Clinton may resemble most is Rose Kennedy, long a symbol to feminists of victimized womanhood, who presaged Hillary's pose of stoic denial by welcoming her husband's long-time mistress into her household as a friend. Rose Kennedy's strolling arm-in-arm with Gloria Swanson is no stranger a picture than that of Mrs. Clinton trotting the globe as spokesman for feminist causes, while her husband faces trial for exposing himself to a booth girl at a convention. Rose Kennedy got to travel and to buy Paris dresses. Hillary Clinton gets to make speeches. The pay-off is different. The price is the same.

High-profile sexual harassment cases are seldom about the accuser; they are always about the accused. People decide if they want the public figure disgraced or embarrassed, and decide from that if the charges are valid.

Liberals wanted desperately to destroy a pro-life black conservative, so they found Anita Hill credible. Likewise, conservatives, who want to weaken Bill Clinton and pay back the left for the Thomas debacle, choose to believe Paula Jones. Neither Jones nor Hill had much to do with it. It was all about whom they accused. "Promoting stories about Clinton's philandering is another way of attacking Hillary," affirms feminist Susan Faludi. "If she had been a more feminine and devoted wife, he wouldn't be running around."

Conversely, dismissing these stories—and attacking their tellers—is a way of defending Hillary: If the stories are false, then the marriage is working, and she is the "right" kind of woman, and wife. Women like Paula Jones and Gayla Zigo—the wronged wife in the Kelly Flinn drama—disrupt the stories the sisters are trying to tell. Gayla Zigo makes a predator out of a woman the feminists want to see as a victim. Paula Jones makes a victim out of a woman the feminists insist upon seeing as strong. Minus Jones, the saga of the Clintons goes like this: A bright, tough girl conquers the prom queens to nab the class catch, who takes her with him to Washington, where they proceed to share the most powerful job on earth.

But what if the class catch consents to marry the girl—and uses her brains to help boost him to power—only because he intends to keep on with the prom queens or their more flamboyant sisters? This is a story the sisters are less happy telling. And one they intend to deny.

The feminist stake in the selling of Hillary Clinton is now far too large to

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

let go. Whatever they have been forced to say—at last, albeit weakly—in her defense, they must be hoping desperately that something will happen to make Jones out to be a fraud; preferably a gold-digging, deranged tool of right-wing interest groups. If she is wrong, then they might salvage something. If not, then not only are two of their leaders in trouble, but their take on the future is wrong. The New Man and New Woman are not better role models than the old. Androgyny isn't the wave of the future. Sex distinctions are not socialized constructs, but deep human impulses. Men can't be taught to want unfeminine women. Women who follow the feminist model may end up, not freer and happier than their mothers were, but sometimes more sad, and more compromised. ◆

Noemie Emery is a contributor to the Weekly Standard.

The Oy! of Sex

Cynthia Grenier yearns for a bit of prudery in women's magazines

NOT MUCH MORE *than a century ago, Henry James stood pretty much alone in lamenting the declaration of the all-powerful literary editor of the day, William Dean Howells, that he would never publish any work he deemed unfit to be placed in the hands of a young girl.*

But in light of what is deemed fit reading matter for young women today, James appears in retrospect as downright chaste. American women, even when wed to decadent Europeans, remain in his novels high-minded if saddened by their fate. James' language is eminently respectable throughout. Sexual disorder is revealed only by such details as the heroine of his Portrait of a Lady *becoming aware of her husband's adultery by perceiving, on coming upon the couple unawares, that he—contrary to the etiquette of the day—has remained seated while his mistress is standing.*

Henry James, let alone William Dean Howells, would be stunned by what is considered acceptable fare for young women these days. As no doubt would their mothers who've probably stopped reading the likes of Mademoiselle, Redbook, *and* Glamour.

The June Glamour *gives us "The Hot, Happy Sex Life of a Virgin" by one Tara McCarthy, who announces she's still a virgin, "and I've been touched, kissed, prodded, rubbed, caressed, licked, nibbled—you name it. More times than I'd like to admit. I don't fit the image of a virgin except for one salient fact: I've never had sexual intercourse."*

Or how about the advice being offered in the June Mademoiselle *by Lynn Snowden as to "What Men Really Want?" Snowden announces she's "been around the block a couple of times" with her eyes wide open and "have always had the strange proclivity for interrogating nearly every man I know about his sexual tastes." She lists ten sex-related activities, leaving out those involving a third party and vaginal intercourse ("an incredibly obvious selection"), heading her list with oral sex. Of fellatio, she observes, "men who don't like to be on the receiving end of oral sex fall into the category of Urban Myths, where they'd co-mingle with mutant alligators in sewers: we've all heard about them, but no one's ever seen one." Snowden then proceeds with some practical, hands-on (as it were) advice—"a pleasant tasting lubricant such as Astroglider facilitates any hand action." The editors put Snowden's tips in big type: "The more you use phrases like 'rock hard' and 'dripping wet,' the better."*

Coverlines get ever bolder. The August Mademoiselle *gives its biggest lettering to: "Your Orgasm: What Men Feel about Getting You There." And* Cosmopolitan *offers in September, "Easy Orgasms—How to Make Them Mind-Blowing and a Lot Less Work."*

Harper's Bazaar, *hitherto a relatively decorous periodical, recently made the ultimate feminist statement with its full-page, full-color illustration of a woman warrior. Masses of dark curly hair, battle-ax slung over one muscled shoulder, swollen breasts barely covered by a scrap of red stretch material, and dangling from her left hand a large pair of hairy human testicles.*

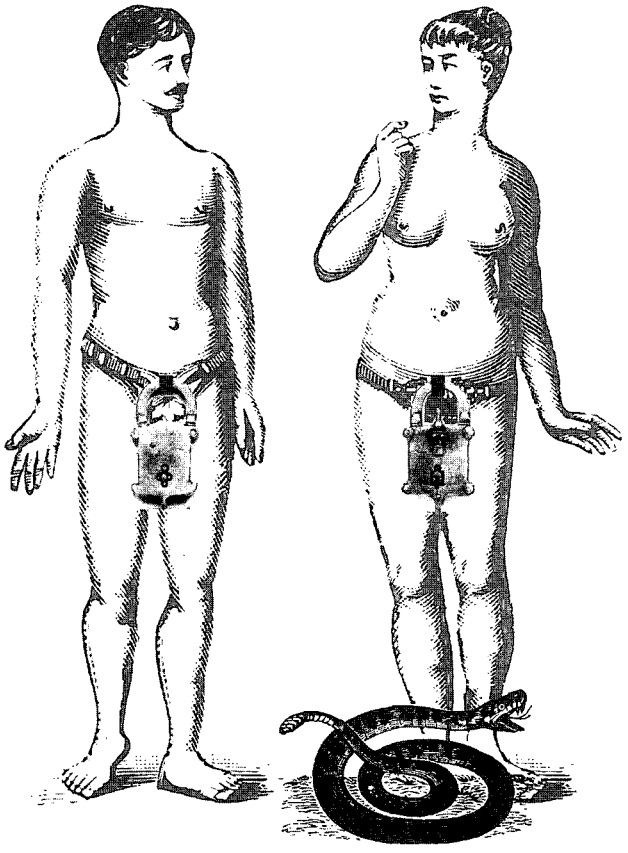
A little Jamesian reticence would surely be welcome about now. ◆

Cynthia Grenier is the magazine columnist for the Washington Times.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Female Condom and Other Bright Ideas

What comes between women and better birth control is lawsuits, observes *Marc M. Arkin*



THIRTY YEARS AGO, American women were promised a contraceptive revolution. In 1997, American women have no more—and possibly fewer—contraceptive options than they did fifteen years ago. Within the last decade, only three new contraceptive products have formally reached the American market; each of these—Depo-Provera, the female condom, and Norplant—is simply a variation on already existing product technology. At the same time, fifty-seven percent of all pregnancies in the United States (over three million a year) are either unwanted or unintended. Half of them end in abortion. Of the fifty-eight million American women of childbearing age, forty-two percent rely on sterilization for birth control. Less than one-third use prescription contraceptives.

In the 1970s, nine American pharmaceutical makers conducted research on new contraceptives; today, there are only two. Small non-profit organizations and universities do almost all the research on a combined budget of roughly $30 million—less than one-eighth of what it takes to bring a new drug to market. While worldwide contraceptive sales amount to about $2.9 billion annually, private companies spend only $22 million in new product research—compared with $600 million spent yearly developing new cosmetics. What happened?

For years, pharmaceutical manufacturers have claimed that the contraceptive revolution fell victim to the cost of product liability litigation, particularly to the risk of "mass torts" in which thousands of claimants sue within a short time, alleging injury from a single product. Perhaps this argument is predictable from an industry with a checkered past: Remember the side effects of the early birth control pills and the disastrous history of the Dalkon Shield? But in 1996, in a study sponsored by the Rockefeller and Mellon foundations, a panel of physicians and health professionals from the Institute of Medicine (part of the National Academy of Sciences) agreed. Citing the "societal, legal, regulatory, and financial pressures" that have stalled the marketing of new contraceptives, the group included product liability reform high among its recommendations.

Given the huge amounts of money that are at stake in the typical mass lawsuit, it's no wonder American companies are reluctant to develop new contraceptive products. What rational business planner wouldn't prefer to concentrate on lipstick and deodorant?

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The result for American women, however, is that they have access to fewer methods of birth control than women in the rest of the developed world.

Consider the cautionary example of the following case. In 1985, the Monsanto company acquired G.D. Searle, a pharmaceutical manufacturer, in order to obtain Searle's $1.5 billion a year NutraSweet manufacturing business. What Monsanto got, in addition, was Searle's Copper-7 intrauterine device (IUD).

Searle introduced the Copper-7 to the American market in the mid-1970s, shortly after the A.H. Robins company withdrew its notorious Dalkon Shield IUD in the face of thousands of lawsuits charging that the device caused unacceptable rates of pelvic infection and other side effects. Unlike the Dalkon Shield, however, the Copper-7 bore FDA approval and had few of the difficulties associated with the Shield.

Unfortunately, when Robins' bankruptcy stalled the Dalkon Shield litigation, Searle became a "target of opportunity" for members of the plaintiffs' bar who had already developed expertise in IUD litigation. By 1986, Searle had five hundred suits pending against it. Faced with difficulties buying product liability insurance and the expense of defending those lawsuits, Searle stopped selling the Copper-7 in the United States.

In the meantime, fueled by a war chest drawn from the $37 million settlement of its Dalkon Shield cases, the Minneapolis law firm of Robins, Zelle, Larson & Kaplan was searching for another cause. The firm spent four years culling through 800,000 documents on behalf of its Copper-7 clients before it achieved the first return on its investment. In 1988, two years after the Copper-7 became unavailable to the American market, a Minnesota jury awarded $8.75 million to Esther Kociemba, a young married woman who claimed that her Copper-7 IUD had triggered a pelvic infection that left her infertile. The judge lowered the award to $8.15 million; of that, $7 million represented an award of punitive damages against Searle for flagrant disregard of consumer interests. (This, despite the jury's express rejection of Kociemba's claim that Searle had negligently designed or manufactured the Copper-7, and even though the IUD was available only through physicians and carried a warning clearly describing its risks.)

That same week, another Copper-7 plaintiff, also represented by Robins, Zelle, received court permission to add Monsanto as a defendant in her suit. She claimed that Monsanto, upon acquiring Searle, had incurred its own obligation to warn prospective users of the Copper-7's dangers and, by failing to do so, became a party to Searle's supposed fraud on consumers. By the end of the week, Monsanto's stock had gone into a free fall, losing eleven percent of its share price. Within months, Searle had settled the Kociemba suit and seventy-six other Copper-7 suits handled by Robins, Zelle.

Today, Searle is still mopping up the last lawsuits against Copper-7. As of late last year, of the 2,063 suits filed against Searle, forty suits in the United States and 346 foreign complaints remained. Most of the cases settled for nominal sums or were dismissed. Of twenty-four cases actually tried, Searle won nineteen. Four of the losses cost Searle a total of $689,000 in damages —the fifth was Kociemba.

At the time of its informal withdrawal, the Copper-7 was the most popular IUD in the United States. To this day, it continues to enjoy FDA approval. Until 1991, it was successfully marketed in Canada and Europe, where IUDs are the most popular form of birth control. And several years ago, an IUD of similar design was discreetly reintroduced to the American market (it's a revamped Copper-7 introduced by the nonprofit Population Council). Despite this record, not only did Searle undergo twenty years of litigation, but an acquiring company faced the threat of substantial exposure on Searle's behalf, and its shareholders saw a substantial portion of their equity put at risk.

Or look what happened to Norplant, which came on the market in 1991 after thirty years of development and testing. Norplant is a hormonal contraceptive device made up of six tiny rods coated in silicone that are implanted under the arm's skin. It lasts five years and has the approval of the Food and Drug Administration, the World Health Organization, and the endorsement of the American Society for Reproductive Medicine. After its launch, Norplant quickly became the tenth most popular form of birth control among American women. In its best year—1992—Norplant accounted for six percent of the profits of its manufacturer, American Home Products.

The magic word in Norplant's coming nightmare was silicone. The same lawyers and medical experts who had obtained a $4 billion settlement against the makers of silicone breast implants turned their attention to Norplant. Their claims about the potentially hazardous effects of Norplant were reminiscent of the ones that had been attributed to silicone implants: an array of auto-immune

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

disorders with a shifting constellation of symptoms. Just to hedge their bets, the complaints also alleged there were hormonal side effects and scarring associated with the removal of the Norplant device, not to mention the psychic distress of being exposed to the risk of disease.

Faced with four suits representing a combined total of 145 plaintiffs, one beleaguered Pennsylvania federal judge noted the complaints were so similar—and so vague as to actual injury and damages—as to be almost identical, right down to the typos. In the meantime, new Norplant insertions dropped from eight hundred a day to sixty. By 1995, with ninety-eight federal suits pending, the panel of judges charged with overseeing multidistrict litigation ordered that most of the federal suits be consolidated in Texas.

Plaintiffs celebrated the event with a wingding in Houston's Four Seasons hotel that drew more than a hundred attorneys for two days of planning and strategy. One press report of the conference described individual attorneys talking of how their offices were handling five hundred, even a thousand or more Norplant cases. A nurse who worked for one plaintiff's firm ruefully described how she wished her office had the case of the woman whose Norplant had migrated to her heart and killed her—something that is physically impossible.

As of this writing, no verdicts have been rendered against American Home Products, and counsel for the manufacturer does not return telephone calls asking about the status of the Norplant litigation, apparently because of a federal gag order in the Texas case. But there are indications that the suits are entering a critical phase. Last August, in the Texas multidistrict litigation, federal Judge Richard Schell denied plaintiffs' motion to certify a nationwide class action representing "all persons...who have suffered or may suffer injury as a result of using Norplant." Instead, Judge Schell ordered that three "bellwether trials" go forward, each involving a group of five plaintiffs. These sample trials will determine if there is enough similarity between the plaintiffs' claims—and sufficient evidence of defendant's liability—to consolidate the thousands of individual suits into a single class action in which a handful of representative plaintiffs will represent the entire group.

Early this spring, well into year two of the litigation, the tide seemed to be turning in favor of American Home Products. First, plaintiffs abandoned a number of their legal theories, including negligent manufacture and design, in order to concentrate on their contention that American Home Products failed to give an adequate warning of Norplant's alleged side effects. Then, in late March, Judge Schell dismissed the first five cases outright because the plaintiffs could not prove this supposedly inadequate warning was a direct cause of their alleged injuries. In fact, each plaintiff's personal physician testified that the manufacturer fully informed him of the side effects, and neither that information, nor additional information obtained from company files, would have changed his decision to prescribe Norplant. In the course of his decision, Judge Schell hinted that some of the remaining bellwether cases are also vulnerable. Early on, American Home Products pledged to stand behind Norplant, a decision that appears to be panning out. But how many other companies will choose to bear this level of expense in the face of declining profits, much less to spend money on new contraceptive products, given this risk?

Congress tried to address the problem of products liability litigation with the Common Sense Product Liability Legal Reform Act of 1996. Among other things, the bill tried to limit the lottery-like aspect of damage awards by capping punitive damages at the higher of either $250,000 or twice the actual economic damages, and eliminating punitive damages altogether for products that had obtained premarket approval from the FDA. Although the bill passed both houses, it was ultimately vetoed by President Clinton.

Ironically, a number of prominent women's groups opposed reform because, they alleged, products aimed at the women's market are less safe than those directed at men and because damage caps would "discriminate" against women. The unintended consequence of their opposition is to restrict women's informed choices about birth control. Feminists argue that the current tort system undervalues women's lives because it tends to compensate plaintiffs for male-oriented items such as lost income rather than for things that reflect women's experience, such as reproductive potential. Reforms that would cap (or limit) noneconomic damages, they assert, would only exacerbate this inequity.

In fact, the feminist claim seems difficult to square with the sizeable awards given individual plaintiffs for loss of fertility in, among others, the Dalkon Shield cases—awards that eventually led A.H. Robins to seek protection in bankruptcy. In one justly famous case, for example, Robins paid out $1.75 million in compensatory

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

damages and $7.5 million in punitive damages to a woman in her forties with three children who eventually underwent a hysterectomy as a result of her use of the Dalkon Shield.

The feminist claim that women's products are more unsafe than men's is no more plausible: Agent Orange (the first real mass tort, consolidating more than six hundred actions representing claims by, among others, some 2.4 million Vietnam veterans, their wives and children, born or unborn, against seven corporate defendants and the American government); the heart valve cases; dioxin; the anticholesterol drug MER/29; penile implants; and the biggest mass tort ever—asbestos exposure. None of these is particularly associated with women.

Most of all, in their focus on the interests of victims, the women's groups ignored a very good demonstration of the effects of tort reform on pharmaceutical research. In 1986, in response to a series of mass tort actions, many manufacturers of childhood vaccines had dropped out of the market and the country was left with less than six months of vaccine stores. In response, Congress passed the National Vaccine Injury Compensation Program. Although the program permits families to pursue individual lawsuits, it sets up obstacles to litigation. By 1990—a mere four years after the program was put in place—a *New York Times* article heralded a major revival in vaccine research by private pharmaceutical companies.

Women can only hope that the same will happen with birth control. ◆

Marc M. Arkin teaches at Fordham University's School of Law in New York. This article is adapted from a speech she gave at the IWF's "Junk Science" conference in Washington.

When Anything Goes

Olivia Vlahos takes the long view of love

What is this thing called love? Not what it used to be, that's for sure. The very word, once in such constant use, is today seldom heard except in an impersonal and abstract sense: "Why can't people love one another?" Or, "I love my aerobics class." One no longer professes to be "in love" but rather "involved." "Courting" as a prelude to marriage is an outmoded convention. One now "sees" someone or "dates." Dating is generally understood to include a sleep-over. It may lead to cohabitation (once referred to as "living in sin") which may or may not lead to marriage. "Making love" (which used to mean "making out") is considered the primary goal of any serious "relationship."

Once upon a time, the word "love" conjured up visions of romance, of the one special being with whom all could be shared, the being whose happiness and safety would matter more than one's own. Sexual encounters unjustified by love were considered morally wrong. One waited and hoped for "the real thing," and the lyrics of virtually every popular song underscored the importance of the quest. "Some day he'll come along, the man I love," began the song by Jerome Kern. And ended with, "We'll build a little home/Just meant for two/From which I'll never roam/Who would, would you?/And so all else above/I'm waiting for the man I love."

Virtually every movie of the period before the Sixties followed a similar formula: Boy-meets-Girl, Boy-loses-Girl, Boy-gets-Girl. And, as in the fairy tales of yore, they married and lived happily ever after. The bedroom aspects of "ever after" were tactfully left to the viewer's imagination. Today's films follow a different formula: Boy-meets-Girl. Boy asks, "Your place or mine?" Camera reveals exactly what Boy and Girl do next. Popular songs—especially those of the hard rock, bebop, or rap variety—not only suggest what is expected of a new acquaintance, but are quite baldly specific.

Well, why not? So today's young elites cheerfully lecture relics of a romantic yesterday as well as their own stubbornly traditionalist peers: "All that silly sighing and swooning was just an elaborate cover-up for plain old lust. How quaint and old fashioned to imagine that only one person can satisfy the urge to merge! At last we are freed from Puritan hang-ups and inhibitions. At last freed to express our sexuality without constraint. After all, that is *normal*." There are, actually—and always have been—many ways of being normal. But that is different from being good or healthy.

To prove the point, one need only take a look at America's micro-societies, those known as cults and sects. Although both may be residential, or at least locational, they differ in some important respects. Cults are groups formed around a revered leader espousing new social and religious ideas. Sects represent the more

Drawing by Gustave Doré

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

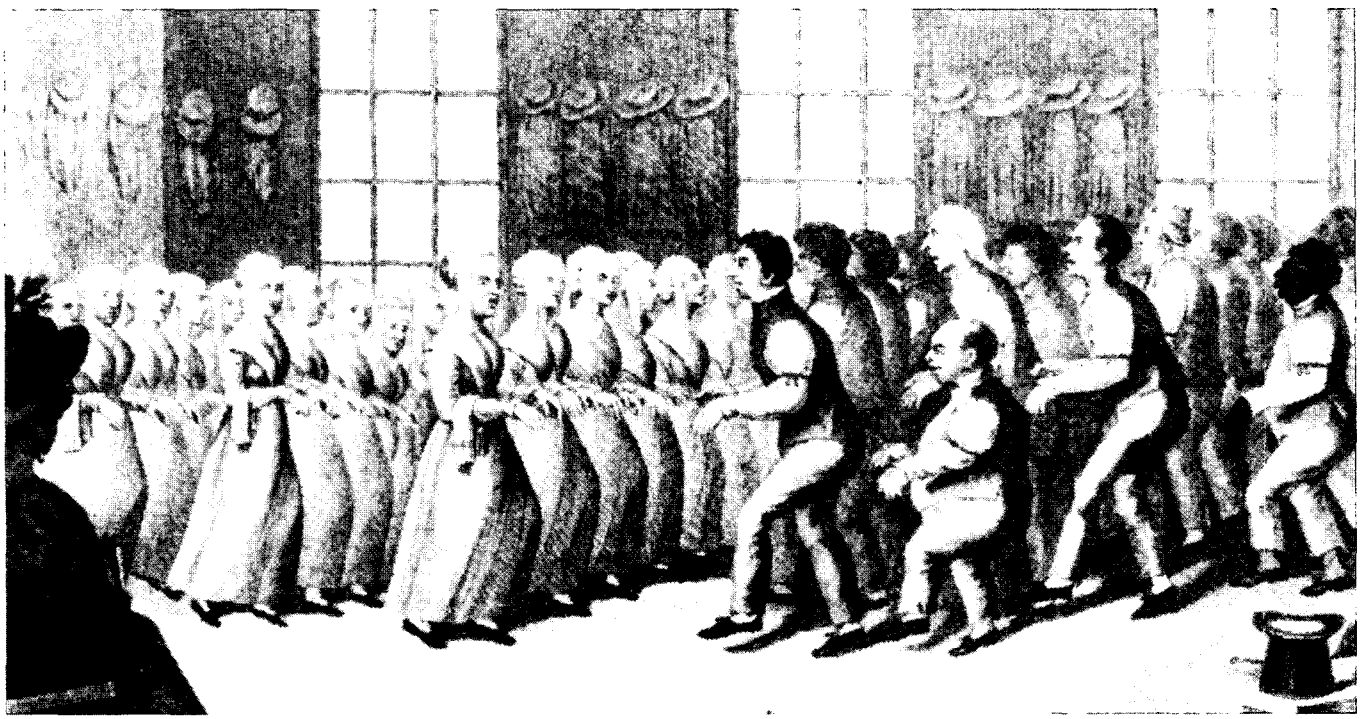
organized form of religions that survive the deaths of their original founders.

One of these is the International Society for Krishna Consciousness, or more popularly, Hare Krishna. Founded in 1965 by A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami, who traveled from India reputedly with a stake of only seven dollars, the by-now worldwide movement is based on devotion to Krishna. During his lifetime, the Swami himself was considered an incarnation of the god. He preached purity of life expressed in abstinence and self-abnegation. Devotees renounced drugs and meat, begged on the streets, and lived together in the temple where they followed a prescribed regimen of prayer and chanting. The sexes were strictly separated. Even married couples were allowed sexual congress only after much prayer and for purposes of procreation. Among the Children of Krishna, that was *normal.*

In the eighteenth century, the Shaking Quakers, or Shakers, banned sex altogether. They did so initially because of the childbed sufferings of their leader, Mother Ann Lee. In their eyes, she represented Christ, indeed was Christ, female and in a Second Coming. So when divine revelation in 1774 bade her to leave England for America, her flock settled obediently and successfully in rural New York. Not, it must be added, before suffering persecution at the hands of their neighbors. Eventually, however, the Shaker way attracted many followers, enough to permit the founding of nineteen colonies. Shaker industry enabled the sect to survive for some two hundred years. Only now does it face extinction.

Each colony was organized as a coed monastery with every possibility of sexual temptation anticipated and forestalled. (There were, for example, separate staircases for men and women. No touching was permitted, however accidental.) Separation was not absolute, though. Each "brother" had his special "sister" to sew buttons on his coat and darn his socks. Community members could enjoy conversations with the opposite sex while seated in parallel rows of chairs, men on one side, women on the other. Sexual congress in the Shaker view endangered the immortal soul. For the Shakers, concern for the soul over the body was *normal.*

Those who hold today's fashionable views will find Shaker customs warped and perverse. They might be startled to discover that many people the world over have shared Shaker concerns about the dangers of sex if not Shaker devotion to abstinence. John Humphrey Noyes, an unsuccessful Vermont preacher of the middle 1800s, was one who found sex dangerous. Not to the soul, but rather in its consequences. Pitying his wife, whose many pregnancies had all but one resulted in stillbirths, he wondered why women should not experience the delights of sex without sorrow and babies every year. Why should not men and women enjoy one another freely without a sense of sin and conventional marriage to bar the way? To put into practice these and other unconventional beliefs about commu-



 Above, even at a celebration in a Shaker meetinghouse, c. 1850, strict segregation of the sexes was observed.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

nal ownership, he founded the Perfectionist Movement. Forced to flee the wrath of Vermont locals, Noyes and company took refuge in the onetime Oneida Reservation in upper New York State. There it survived for thirty-five years, thanks to a member who made best-selling traps and later silverware still known as Oneida.

In the Oneida "Mansion," sex was free but circumspect. Noyes decreed that elderly ladies must be given preference lest they miss all the fun. Go-betweens were available to schedule assignations and to nip in the bud any incipient favoritism. But first things first. How to deal with the unwanted consequences of sex? Noyes found the answer in *coitus reservatus:* the enjoyment of sex without ejaculation (which, in any case, he considered weakening for a man). Male continence, he assured his followers, was not only possible, it was easy. What is more, it was normal. Modern urologists would not agree. Overstimulation without release, they caution, will inevitably result in various urogenital complaints. Not so in the Oneida community. The system was used throughout the life of the colony with no untoward physical symptoms reported among the men and no unintentional pregnancies among the women.

There was, however, a snake in this garden of sexual Eden. The snake was love. It happened rarely; members were too well armed against it by Noyes, who deemed "special love" the ultimate sin. Monogamy he called selfish and exclusive. It prevented sharing. "You don't love her," he is said to have lectured one abashed romantic. "You love happiness!" The odd couple with eyes only for one another were quickly banished to separate branch communities. In Oneida, lust was normal; love was not. Properly managed, lust served to strengthen the community. Love constituted high treason. (George Orwell explored that premise in *1984.*)

It has a certain logic. After all, nobody ever asks, "What is this thing called lust?" Nobody needs to ask. Without it, there would be no peopling. It is an essential feature of life itself and so, among humans, is permanently subject to custom. Custom prescribes when and how desire may be slaked and with whom. This is so among all people because lust has consequences in offspring. It has social consequences as well. The society marked by sexual anarchy cannot for long survive.

Love ennobles lust but is not essential to life. Custom cannot command or constrain it. Love is merely the gift that makes life worth living, whether or not the gift is valued or understood. In the manner of the Oneidans, today's elites have placed a high value on lust, and while love has not been expressly forbidden, it has been largely ignored. Liberated for sex, they have liberated themselves from love. The signs are very clear, however, that love's absence is being felt. After years of career concentration, of cohabiting with a series of similarly career-oriented "significant others," the increasingly lonely, no longer so upwardly mobile, no longer so young professionals begin to wonder whether this liberated state of affairs is all there is to life. What happened to happily-ever-after? they wonder. What happened to romance?

It is a question hard to answer, though many have tried. According to the late sociologist Marcia Guttentag, history demonstrates that wherever and whenever the demographic balance favored females, one could expect to find a strong feminist ethos and a dominating, mannish ideal of womanhood. (Sound familiar?) Societies in which women outnumbered men, she said, were always less romantic than those in which female numbers were fewer.

The annals of ethnography reveal traditions of romance only in those societies in which lust is most stringently enchained by custom, societies in which the standards of male/female behavior are the most demanding, the punishment for flouting the rules most severe. In other words, romance appears to flourish among the boundaries, or perhaps because of boundaries. (Any Jane Austen novel will illustrate the proposition.) One can observe boundaries even in the courtship rituals of animals—always the most complex and intense among those beings which mate for life.

"Could the threat of AIDS bring back romance?" It is a plaint frequently heard. Disease as boundary? Why not? It may, at least, offer young women a legitimate reason to say "no" and wait for Mr. Right. Even so, anxieties remain. "There will be a Mr. Right, won't there?" they ask. "I will be married eventually, won't I?" (One hears the feeling if not the tune: "Some day he'll come along, the man I love ...")

Though current fashion still favors adventuring, the quest for a one-and-only has begun to seem more plausible all the time. So has the longing for one's other self, joined until-death-do-us-part. Hopes have been reborn for happily-ever-after in a "little home just meant for two."

What is this thing called love? It is happiness. That is what the liberated are beginning to find out. ◆

Olivia Vlahos is a retired professor of anthropology and the author of seven books in her field.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Correspondence

PHEW! WE'RE STILL *reeling from the response to our summer issue. Rondi Adamson's suggestions for politically correct Barbies ("Bulimic Barbie") was picked up by the Knight-Ridder/Tribune syndicate and reprinted across the country. Most readers appeared to take it with good humor but it drew sour-faced disapproval from certain quarters. ("Ouch," complained James Warren, media columnist for the* Chicago Tribune.*) Sally Satel, author of our cover story "It's Always His Fault," also found herself an object of national attention for her revelation of the uselessness of feminist therapy in the treatment of wife batterers. And Julie Ann Kessler's article "An Immodest Proposal"—on the National Organization for Women's embrace of polygamy—provoked among the biggest reaction that our magazine has ever received.*

Kessler wrote about the decision of NOW's Utah chapter to invite a "feminist polygamist" to be keynote speaker at one of its meetings. Polygamy is great for career women like her, the speaker told the group, because she was able "to go to law school four hundred miles away, knowing her husband had clean shorts" and her eight-year-old son had "never seen the inside of a day-care center." Kessler went on to quote three members of the chapter's executive, who agreed that polygamy was an intriguing option for busy women: Robin Frodge, who serves on NOW's national board, told Kessler that NOW supports, "an expanded definition of family, including same-sex parents. It's very difficult to look at that and not support other configurations of families, including polygamous families."

Kaboom! After the story was published, news organizations across the continent picked it up. The Washington Times *contacted one of the executive members quoted by Kessler, who repeated her endorsement*

of polygamy. Rush Limbaugh broadcast the item for two days, and other media jumped in. Embarrassed, the NOW members insisted that they were "misquoted" [see Frodge's letter below].

Unfortunately for them, they had endorsed polygamy to three different reporters from three separate news organizations: us, the Washington Times, *and the Associated Press. And despite all their huffing and puffing, nobody from NOW ever condemned—or even criticized—polygamy; they simply asserted it wasn't NOW's "official policy" to endorse it. (We never claimed that it was.)*

Indeed, in defending the group's choice of speaker, Frodge said in a press release, "Utah NOW is not afraid to listen to or consider views other than their own, both in an effort to seek common ground and also to expand understanding. Common ground in this case includes the need for working women to have quality child care and for all women to make their own lifestyle choices."

Ironically, NOW issued this statement the same week its president, Patricia Ireland, called a press conference to condemn the Promise Keepers—the Christian group committed to the promotion of responsible fatherhood. So what we surmise from this whole controversy is that NOW supports the right of "all women to make their own lifestyle choices," except for one: monogamous marriage to conscientious Christian fathers. You can read Kessler's own reply to NOW below.

We love hearing from you! Send your letters to the Editor, The Women's Quarterly, *2111 Wilson Boulevard, Suite 550, Arlington, Virginia 22201-3057. You may also fax them to 703/243-9230, or e-mail us at iwf@iwf.org. By the way, readers are still responding to our challenge in the last correspondence column to come up with things feminists might actually find funny. Mary Klinger, of Palmyra, Pennsylvania, offers this addition to the very short list: "Divorced (again) Rush Limbaugh." Ouch.*

Misleading on polygamy

YOUR ARTICLE "AN Immodest Proposal" (Summer 1997) was misleading and inaccurate. Direct quotes attributed to me as a spokesperson for the Utah National Organization for Women were, in fact, my description of Elizabeth Joseph's address to our state conference last May. I was very clear to writer Julie Ann Kessler in saying I was not speaking on behalf of NOW. I was merely relating Joseph's description of herself as a polygamist feminist, and strongly encouraged Kessler to speak with Joseph herself.

NOW has no policy which addresses polygamy. No efforts were made at either the Utah state conference or subsequent national conferences to introduce such a resolution. Your article was inaccurate, misleading, and irresponsible.

ROBIN FRODGE
Springville, Utah

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Julie Kessler replies:

ROBIN FRODGE IS quick to use phrases like "innacurate, misleading, and irresponsible" in her criticisms of my article. But what she neglects to do is disavow the position that got her into trouble in the first place. Although she admitted to me that polygamy made her "uncomfortable," she could not come up with any principled reason to object to it.

When Frodge related Joseph's talk to me, she made it clear that she was sympathetic to her point of view. The real irresponsibility lies with the Utah chapter of NOW, and its decision to invite Joseph to speak. How could a group that ostensibly defends equal rights for women invite a speaker to come and promote polygamy as a serious alternative for women?

Overlooked extremism

CONGRATULATIONS ON BREAKING the story of NOW members endorsing polygamy. I believe that you've done us all a great service by exposing the tolerance and even support of such extremism in organizations like NOW. My experience in the pro-life movement tells me that ordinary women, the media, and society in general have overlooked it for too long, to the detriment of addressing the real concerns of women and families. Thanks for providing some real diversity in the women's movement and genuine insight in the media.

JIM HUGHES
President
Campaign Life Coalition Canada
Toronto, Canada

War is the mistake, not women at war

I READ WITH interest Danielle Crittenden's Diary on women in the military ("This Is the Army, Mrs. Jones," Summer 1997). Although I could go on for days, there is one unlikely argument in her commentary that bears review.

Miss Crittenden comments that war is no place for women. I would have to expand that to say that war is no place for human beings. Brutality and savagery are hardly things that anyone should have to endure, not just women.

I served in our military for eight years after graduating from West Point in 1983. We practiced the art of warfare as a last resort. No one thought it was going to be pretty. Not one of my soldiers ever wanted to go to war. We wanted to protect our country. And we would do so if called upon.

I didn't join the military out of any feminist notions. I love this country and would die to protect our freedoms. I would fight alongside any man or woman worthy of the title of soldier, and there are quite a few of them. Should pregnant women and mothers be in the service? I couldn't do both. My children came first. For others, no such "maternal instinct" is there. I cannot philosophically debate whether all women can and must be soldiers (*i.e.*, the draft) but I personally cannot fathom anyone—man or woman—who would not want to fight and die for our country. That is truly the bottom line for me.

I once read (I can't quote it verbatim) that "a man who would not fight for freedom cannot expect to be free unless made and kept so by the exertions of better men than himself." I think that says it all.

I am also a proud member of the IWF, truly believing that, unlike in NOW, there is room for debate amongst our members. I hope I am not mistaken.

BONNIE SCHWEPPE
New York, New York

We may manipulate men, but never statistics

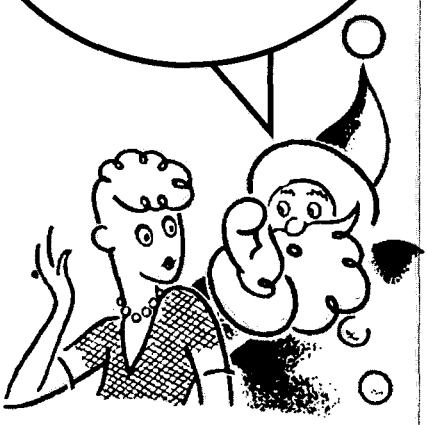
I RECENTLY RECEIVED your cutesy reminder of my lapsed subscription and IWF membership and decided to reply with an explanation for my decision not to renew.

I and many conservative business women like myself are looking for some representation in the GOP and conservative movement. Your upscale marketing and intelligent, articulate spokesmen initially impressed me. However, I have been disappointed and I write to perhaps encourage you to explore directions more friendly to independent women rather than to the shameless shoring up of much that is increasingly marginalizing the conservative movement.

Your denial of any anti-woman discrimination in the workplace is really a betrayal one expects of uneducated, dependent women who view other women as competition for resources. I do not support the radical feminists and their agenda nor their self-hate and rage. But your manipulation and distortion of statistics to disprove real male bias and sexual harassment in the workplace as well as domestic dis-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"It is better to light a candle than curse the darkness, and better still to have the bright light cast by The Women's Quarterly."
~ GEORGE F. WILL



RATHER THAN CURSING *darkly at what to give people this holiday season, why not share the light that just keeps getting brighter and brighter?*

A subscription to The Women's Quarterly *makes an elegant, thoughtful gift for any woman you admire, particularly those eccentric, delightful, hard-to-buy-for women whom you don't wish to burden with another silk scarf or bottle of bath oil.*

And you won't even have to wrap it!

Just call our toll-free number (1-800-224-6000) to order subscriptions for all the wonderful women in your life. We'll make sure they receive a pretty gift card alerting them to your intentions. And we won't tell them that their year's supply of provocative reading, nervy one-liners, and cutting-edge journalism cost you the special rate of only $16.95 (less than an FTD poinsettia!).

Don't you wish finding an original gift was always this easy?

putes involving spouse abuse, child abuse, custody etc. is very unfortunate. I urge your leadership to reevaluate your stances on some of the issues I have raised. With a more even approach I know you would be able to recruit a much larger number of women who truly have no home in the current political atmosphere.

W. LORRAINE WATKINS, M.D.
Dawsonville, GA

Clearly you don't work at Mattel

I REALLY ENJOYED the summer issue. I showed the "Bulimic Barbie" piece to the girls in my office. It was hilarious and well-received.

KRISTA KAFER
Washington, D.C

Don't throw away old Barbies unless you're ageist

THE "ONE LAST Observation" (Summer 1997) suggested politically correct Barbies of the future (Bulimic Barbie, etc.). However, Barbie is already quite varied in her choice of careers and lifestyles. Visit Toys "R" Us and you'll see Doctor Barbie, Paleontologist Barbie, or Skating and Dancer Barbies, but at our house we have even more in residence:

- Contortionist Barbie: the career for Ballet Barbie after she has lost all her toe shoes;
- Imelda Marcos Barbie: who has collected the shoes of all the Barbies;
- Land Mine Barbie: Barbie finds she can still wear all her clothes and look great without an arm or leg;
- Fetishist Barbie: the one who sleeps under the bed;
- Cross Dresser Barbie: who's taken all GI Joe's clothes;
- Polygamist Barbie: warming the hearts of the Utah NOW ladies, fifteen Barbies and one Ken;
- Manic-Depressive Barbie: "Look Mommy. She's happy. She's sad. She's happy. She's sad."
- Gypsy Rose Lee Barbie: her only life is taking off her clothes. Sometimes she gets up with Nudist Barbie who insists on going out to dinner without clothes on. Gypsy Rose Lee Barbie actually departs with clothes and removes them once in full view of other patrons.

MERRIE SPAETH
Dallas, Texas

That's because you needed a "sex" angle

I HAVE BEEN meaning for months now to tell you how pleased I was with your discussion of "the servant problem" (Winter 1997). I have subscribed for about two years now and read every issue with interest. But last winter's issue struck me especially hard because it's a subject nobody else wants to talk about.

I know because I tried to write about it myself several years ago. I am a writer—have published books and produced plays—and thought this would make a great article or even a book. The only piece I could find about domestics was a half-baked, anecdotal doctoral dissertation deposited at New York University. So I sent a proposal to a number of women's magazines and got very cordial responses, all asking me for other ideas, all explaining that their readers were just not interested.

NAHMA SANDROW MEYERS
New York, New York

Sure thing

KEEP YOUR MAGAZINES, reports, essays coming. They are a sunburst of good sense amid the stygian traffic of the media and the courts.

GEORGE GILDER
Tyringham, Massachusetts

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

One last observation . . .

Upgrading from Girlfriend 4.0 to Wife 1.0

A warning to other software users from a disgruntled consumer

LAST YEAR, A friend upgraded from Girlfriend 4.0 to Wife 1.0 and found that it's a memory hog leaving few system resources for other applications. He also noticed that Wife 1.0 is now spawning child-processes which are further consuming valuable resources.

No mention of this was included in the product manual, although other users have informed me that this is to be expected due to the nature of the application. Not only that, Wife 1.0 installs itself so that it is always launched at system initialization where it can monitor all other system activity. Some applications such as PokerNite 10.3, Bachelor Party 2.5, and PubNite 7.0 are no longer able to run in the system at all (even though these applications worked fine before).

Furthermore, Wife 1.0 provides no installation options. Thus, the installation of undesired plug-ins such as Mother-in-law 55.8 and the Sister-in-law Beta is unavoidable. Also, system performance seems to diminish with each passing day.

Some features we would like to see in any upcoming Wife 2.0:

- A "Don't Remind Me Again" button.
- A minimize button.
- A feature that allows Wife 2.0 to be installed with the option of uninstalling at any time without loss of Cache and other system resources.

I myself wish I had decided to avoid all of the headaches associated with Wife 1.0 by sticking with Girlfriend 3.0. Even here, however, I'd found many problems. Apparently you cannot install Girlfriend 4.0 on top of Girlfriend 3.0. You must uninstall Girlfriend 3.0 first, otherwise the two versions of Girlfriend will have conflicts over shared use of the I/O port.

Other users have told me that this is a long-standing problem that I should have been aware of. To make matters worse, the uninstall program for Girlfriend 3.0 doesn't work very well, leaving undesirable traces of the application in the system. Another problem is that all versions of Girlfriend continually pop up with annoying little messages about the advantages of upgrading to Wife 1.0.

BUG WARNING: All users should be aware that Wife 1.0 has an undocumented bug. If you try to install Mistress 1.1 before uninstalling Wife 1.0, Wife 1.0 will delete MSMoney files before uninstalling. Then, for some reason, Mistress 1.1 won't install at all, claiming insufficient resources. To avoid the aforementioned bug, try installing Mistress 1.1 on a different system, and never run any file transfer (such as Laplink) between the two systems. ◆

Editor's Note: A reader passed this along from the Internet. The author is unknown.

Drawing by Charles Jaffé

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

FOR THE PAST five years, the Independent Women's Forum has been taking on the old establishment of feminist organizations—and winning. "The IWF has a profile almost unheard of for a group that is the new kid on the block," writes the *Boston Globe*. "In the marketplace of ideas, from the national news media all the way down to local radio, the IWF has shown its real strength....[The] IWF is well on its way to becoming the foremost media nemesis of the feminist movement."

"*Dangerous.*"

~ Patricia Ireland, president of the National Organization for Women, on the IWF

Why has the IWF been so successful? Because the women who make up the IWF are not radical ideologues—they're businesswomen, economists, lawyers, truck drivers, and also mothers. Because the IWF promotes individual responsibility, strong families, limited government, and opportunity—policies that help *all* Americans. Because the IWF, a non-partisan, nonprofit Washington organization, sponsors speaker events and conferences noted for their provocative and free-ranging debates. And because the IWF publishes *The Women's Quarterly*—an intellectual antidote to *Ms.*—which syndicated columnist Mona Charen praises as, "My type of women's magazine! With humor and sarcasm but also with warmth and passion, these women offer an intelligent refutation of the leading feminist nonsense that is swallowed so uncritically by the mainstream press."

WHY NOT JOIN US? Check "Yes, I want to join" on the enclosed reply card, and you'll receive a year's subscription to *The Women's Quarterly** as well as our insiders-only newsletter *Ex Femina,* special invitations to our conferences and speeches, and discounts on books and events. Most important, you'll be adding another voice of reason—yours!—to the cultural and political debates of our time.

* Separate subscriptions to *The Women's Quarterly* are also available. See reply card for details.

The Women's Quarterly

Independent Women's Forum
2111 Wilson Boulevard, Suite 550
Arlington, Virginia 22201-3057

Address Correction Requested

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED